

SUNite

Shedding some light on UFOlogy and UFOs



The sociology of UFO's can tell us something about human nature. Jules Verne said, "What one man can imagine, another man can do." I propose a corollary: "What one man can fantasize, another man will believe."

Dr. William Hartmann - UFOs : A scientific debate.



Front: A toy helium balloon with an internal LED for illumination. The balloon was easy to see from a distance of a few hundred feet. I used a length of fishing line as a "leash" so the balloon would not drift away and produce UFO reports.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Who's blogging UFOs.....	2-3
The Roswell Corner	4
Correction to SUNlite 6-2.....	4
UFOs on the tube: Hanger One.....	5-18
Linda Cortile and 'Nighteyes' by Luis Gonzales.....	19-21
'Nighteyes' and the Linda legend by Peter Brookesmith.....	22-26
The UFO evidence under review: June 24, 1950.....	27-30
The 701 club - Case 4050: April 4, 1956.....	31-35
Buy it, borrow it, or bin it.....	35

Benefiting humanity

MUFON'S recent endeavor in promoting a TV show about their case files has quite a few people scratching their heads. The program presents questionable evidence, documents that are not authentic, recordings that are not true recordings, rumors, wild speculation, and very few facts to promote this organizations methodology and goals. As each episode aired, I became more and more amazed at how this looked like MUFON's version of "Ancient Aliens". I can only presume that MUFON realized that because "Ancient Aliens" has had such a good run, they could use the same formula for Hanger 1. That formula appears to be outlandish claims equals high ratings, which results in plenty of money. While MUFON was promoting fabrications and wild speculation as scientific research, Cosmos gave us a far different accounting of how actual scientific research had been done over the centuries. The history described by Neil DeGrasse Tyson were actual contributions to the knowledge of humankind and it was entertaining. He did not have to fabricate documents or tell ridiculous stories to get the attention of his audience, who had their minds expanded by the experience. Unlike MUFON's farce, Cosmos was a true benefit to humanity.

On a sad note, I received word that UFO researcher Joel Carpenter had passed away in April. Joel and I had many e-mail exchanges about various UFO cases. Some of these discussions were combative and others were more of an exchange of information. One case, in particular, held Joel's interest over the past few years but he never finished his work. I never saw any rough drafts of any articles but I did receive quite a bit of material from him regarding the case. He had shared this with me for discussion purposes only and requested I keep the information he shared confidential. With his passing, I feel my obligation for confidentiality is no longer effective. I intend to present much of what he shared with me in the next issue.

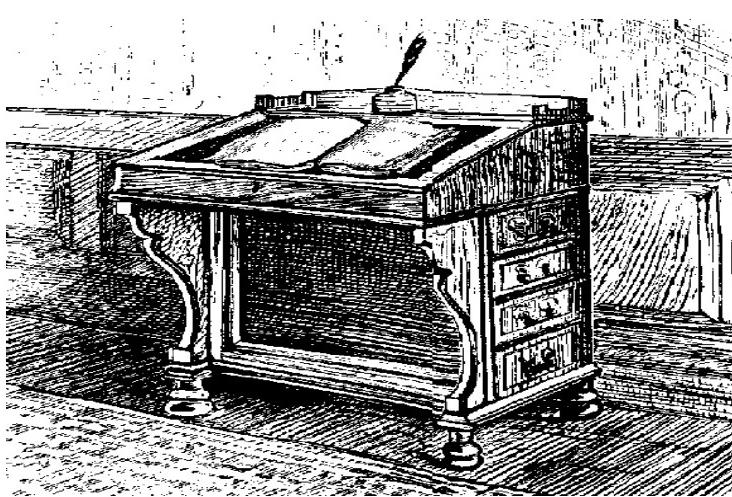
In SUNlite 6-2, I mentioned a planned worldwide UFO hoax using remote controlled vehicles lit with LEDs that was supposed to occur in early April. The event never happened. The lesson here is if you intend on pulling off a hoax of this type, it would be a good idea NOT to mention it in a public forum BEFORE you execute the plan.

I realize it has little to do with UFOs but, for those unaware of it, there COULD be an interesting meteor display on the morning of May 24th. Meteors will be coming from the vicinity of the north celestial pole around 3-4 AM EDT. The number of meteors visible is uncertain but the rates may be high and fireballs from the radiant might produce UFO reports.

I would like to thank Peter Brookesmith and Luis Gonzales for their contributions to this issue. The information they present is very informative and should be read by all of those interested in alien abductions. It is the kind of information you won't see mentioned in "Hanger one".

Who's blogging UFOs?

Hot topics and varied opinions



Tim Hebert has begun to display his work on the 1968 Minot UFO case. This was a case that had recently risen to prominence as one of those great cases, where an alien spaceship might have been involved. Tim has yet to reveal his full examination of the case but his investigation of the visual sightings so far is worth reading. When I first examined these written reports, I felt that there was a good chance that the ground personnel had simply misperceived bright stars that were scintillating (as well as disappearing/reappearing due to clouds). Tom Tullen, who champions this case and has commented on Tim's blog, states that they were not stars because he could triangulate the observations to indicate they were close. This assumes they all saw the same object and gave precise observations that allowed such computations to be accurate. However, if they were looking at different stars or made errors in observations due to time (some of these observations that were used were revealed decades later!), then

such calculations would probably be inaccurate. Stay tuned as Mr. Hebert continues to update his findings on this interesting case.

Carol Rainey sent out an open letter to the UFO community, which sparked a lot of debate at the UFO collective. There seems to be a certain part of the UFO community that considers Budd Hopkins a "saint". Does that make UFOlogy a religion or a science? For those interested in abduction stories, I might suggest this month's articles written by Luis Gonzalez and Peter Brookesmith.

Kitty Mervine chronicled the attempt by John Fuller and Betty Hill to sue Carl Sagan for his use of their story in the Cosmos series. Fuller seemed upset that Carl used the Betty and Barney Hill story to debunk the star map. Had Fuller's story been a fictional account that he wrote, he might have had a case for a lawsuit. Since it was a historical event that was in the public record, he really had no case.

One would think the Chilean bug videos from two years ago would have made UFO researchers wary. This video of an Argentinean airshow showed an unidentified object, which appeared for just a few frames. There is nothing in this video that indicates this was not a bug.

If John Ventre, who is the MUFON state director of Pennsylvania, did not embarrass himself enough on the television program, Hanger 1, he decided to go for broke in March. When Malaysia Airline 370 mysteriously disappeared over the ocean, he sent out e-mails proclaiming that it had been abducted by aliens. This is what happens when a UFO organization's leadership goes over the edge and starts promoting conspiracy theories as factual. Because of Hanger 1, Ventre felt empowered to start spouting off something truly ridiculous. Because MUFON did not publicly refute the claims of one of their leading authorities, they are complicit in promoting this kind of nonsense.

MUFON continues to utter the words "Case closed" when they can't find an answer. I can easily translate those words to mean "I give up" or "I want this to be unexplained". A prime example is evidence presented to MUFON in the form of a photograph taken in 1957. The witness says it shows a cigar shaped UFO and MUFON's expert concluded it was an "unknown aerial vehicle". Any photographer outside UFOlogy would probably recognize it is not a "vehicle". It is too sharp compared to the blurriness of the rest of the photo. It is, more than likely, a defect in the negative/print or, possibly, something that happened during or after the scanning process. In another photographic case from November 26, 2010, MUFON "closed" it because it was considered impossible to identify (the investigator also gave it the "unidentified aerial vehicle" label). Open minds writer, Alejandro Rojas, offered a very probable solution. It was an advertising banner being towed by an airplane. One can even see, what appears to be, the small plane that was towing it! I downloaded the original images from MUFON's web site and a bit of tweaking in Photoshop made the airplane appear more clear although it was still difficult to read the banner. Other cases continue to be "closed" because MUFON says they can't identify them. Based on what I have seen from MUFON's field investigators, some of them do a poor job of investigating and MUFON's "case closed" label is being used too frequently in order to create "headlines" on their UFO blog. This says a lot of how MUFON has degenerated into the "I want to believe" mentality. It is embarrassing and the MUFON leadership has chosen to throw out proper investigative techniques in favor of tabloid journalism.

Curt Collins continues to put out useful information related to the Cash-Landrum case. The actual car highlighted one posting. The one thing that I have always been curious about are the handprints that were supposedly left on the dash. Curt presented us with the "evidence". The handprints were not easily visible in the photograph taken by Schuessler. One would think that Scheussler would have taken his time to clearly photograph the impressions so one could clearly see the evidence. Curt Collins had another interesting section on the Cash-Landrum story when he tried to compare various known objects with what was reported. The hot

Who's blogging UFOs? (Cont'd)

air balloon was an interesting comparison but seems to be a stretch. I have always wondered if a helicopter with a bright spotlight might have been involved. There is also Van Utrecht's light pillar theory. It is really hard to say without a time machine. The case can remain unexplained but one thing is certain. The story, as currently told, is not accurate. The key to solving it is probably missing because the witnesses and some investigators distorted it out of existence.

The annual recap of the Arizona UFOs occurred in mid-March. There was nothing new so I will reference any arguments for the case towards SUNlite 2-3, where I gave my explanation for all aspects of the event. When more information, that I can reveal, becomes available, I will let the readers know about it.

UFOlogy's foot doctor Roger Leir passed away in March. Paul Kimball (who has, once again, revived his blog) reflected on Dr. Leir's dabbling in alien implants. Kimball's commentary pretty much reflects my thoughts on the matter. Contrary to what his studies indicated, nothing he ever extracted was proven to be of alien origin. Either Dr. Leir fooled himself into believing he was extracting alien implants or his integrity was suspect. I regret his passing but his legacy is what people will remember.

Anthony Bragalia continued his hunt for the students, who fooled poor Lonnie Zamora. This time he "discovered" an on-line article that showed a balloon being launched from Mount Baldy in New Mexico. Since this involved people from New Mexico tech and the balloon looked sort of like a rocket, Bragalia assumed this was the culprit used to hoax Zamora. However, in his past article on this subject, Bragalia proposed the students used a large Chinese lantern-type balloon. Now he suggests that they used helium and not hot air. Bragalia's efforts to promote this theory are really not satisfactory since he relies mostly on speculation and no real evidence. Over a decade ago, I was inspired by the hot air balloon hypothesis as being likely and argued for it. However, when I saw the wind data from the time period, I determined that it was untenable. I am not sure how Bragalia can make his balloon hoax fly against the wind. Until he demonstrates how this was possible, his explanation will continue to fall flat.

Robert Sheaffer has an interesting article about how Laurence Rockefeller tried to get Carl Sagan involved with his quest for UFOs. Shepard Johnson had been doing the research on the subject and revealed this information in the Facebook UFO Updates group. Sagan's response was what one might expect:

My view is that anecdotal evidence, unsubstantiated by physical evidence, is worth a single substantive bit of physical evidence. A million reports that the Earth is flat has no veridical value on the shape of the Earth.

I am sure the UFO proponents will argue against Sagan's philosophy but it continues to be the argument presented by science. Until UFOlogy decides to change the way it gathers data about these reports, they will always be "case closed" in the eyes of most scientists.

Jack Brewer's accounting of the Ambient Monitoring Project (AMP) was very revealing. I always wondered why abductees did not have better evidence for their alleged abductions. The AMP was an attempt by UFO groups to gather that evidence but, for some reason or another, they did not reveal the results of their findings. The skeptic in me states that these UFO groups might have had a reason not to analyze the data or reveal any results of their research. It could have been that the data would show that most, if not all, the abduction stories are not verifiable because they simply reside in the minds of the abductees and not in the physical world. If they had found something meaningful, they certainly would have spent more money on the study and published the results. This is just another one of those instances, where UFOlogists have appeared to allowed their personal bias to interfere with research and conceal evidence that does not agree with their own beliefs.

Ted Molczan continues to update his re-entries database and has produced a permanent link where the latest revision will be available for download. This is a wealth of information for those looking back at the older UFO cases that might have been caused by space debris re-entering the atmosphere. It is excellent work that should not be ignored by skeptics and proponents.

The daily mail endorsed Nick Pope's book on Rendlesham. For some reason, the writer simply accepted everything that Nick Pope had to say and ignored everything else. The author was either a good friend of Pope or was not very interested at looking beyond what Pope wrote. Skeptics know that Pope is just repackaging these flawed stories hoping the public is going to blindly accept what he has to say.

A Wichita, Kansas photographer recorded a flying triangle. It is an interesting photograph but it looks like a military aircraft of some kind (possibly a B-2 or drone). I don't think "true UFOs" leave contrails unless they want to mimic our aircraft.

Kevin Randle had some very interesting articles about the Interplanetary Phenomenon Unit and its mention in the MJ-12 documents. Mr. Randle points out that the IPU was not created until 1958 and had a lot to do with the launching of the first satellites and less to do with recovering crashed alien spaceships. These articles provide everyone with a lot more information than what you would find elsewhere. Mr. Randle also focused his attention on the Levelland case and electromagnetic effects on automobiles. UFO gospel states that UFOs can shutdown car engines but there seems to be little consistency in these effects. Not all close encounters with UFOs shutdown cars/airplane engines and there seems to be little physical evidence to support the claims that the UFOs had actually interfered with the operation of the vehicle's engine. Like the sightings themselves, these effects are based mostly on anecdotal evidence.

The Roswell Corner

I saw nothing!!

Kevin Randle gave us some more details about his involvement in the slide controversy. I am satisfied with Mr. Randle's explanation about he was not really involved in any investigation but he should have been a bit more honest about this involvement when he was asked publicly. Either he could have refused to comment or he could have revealed what he knew.

Now that Kevin Randle has come clean, when will Tony Bragalia be honest with everyone about what he really knows? He has refused to answer the question if he has seen the slide(s) in various blog entries. However, when Billy Cox talked to him, he was quite open about having seen it/them.

I still suspect the slides will make their appearance at the annual Roswell festival. How much will people be charged to see this earth-shattering event?

Bill Clinton speaks Roswell

Bill Clinton appeared on Jimmy Kimmel and briefly talked about UFOs and Roswell. He had nothing new to add and seemed to accept the findings of the USAF and GAO. I am sure the disclosure proponents will simply say he can't reveal the secrets because they are classified "beyond top secret". When such beliefs are so strongly held, it is impossible to demonstrate they are false no matter what evidence is presented. One might as well try to convince creationists that the earth is over four billions years old.

Jumping to the wrong conclusion

As I was preparing the final touches on SUNlite 6-3, I noticed that Anthony Bragalia posted a piece about Professor Charles Moore secretly collaborating with the USAF for their 1997 report on Roswell. His prize evidence is an interview Charles Moore gave to Tim Shawcross back in 1994/1995, where Moore alluded to the fact the USAF would produce another report to explain away the "bodies" question about Roswell. Bragalia states this indicates that Moore was working secretly with the USAF to write a second report.

There is no evidence to indicate that Moore was actually involved with writing the 1997 report. However, he did know two of the individuals involved. Dr. Bernard Gildenberg, who was involved in several balloon projects at Holloman AFB, was one of the authors of the second report. In the May/June 1998 issue of *Skeptical Inquirer* (page 31 *Case Closed: Reflections on the 1997 Air Force Roswell Report*), Dr. Gildenberg described the research that went into the report. It would be no surprise that he probably discussed the research with his associate, Charles Moore. The other individual involved in writing the report was Captain McAndrew. Since he had worked on the 1994 report and had spent some time with Moore learning about MOGUL, it would be no surprise that he might have discussed some of his findings with Moore as well. Instead of some vast conspiracy involving Moore, it seems it probably was just a matter of Moore knowing who the authors of the report were and that they trusted him enough to describe what they were doing.

The bottom line here is that there is always a more reasonable explanation for such things. Jumping to wild conclusions based on belief is not the same thing as carefully reading about the subject further and learning what probably did occur.

Correction to SUNlite 6-2

In Marty Kottmeyer's article in the last issue, he stated the following regarding Jeff Ritzmann:

"Jeff Ritzmann, of the Paratopia podcast series, is one of the more vocal abductees disenchanted with the ETH. In his experiences he has seen a being exiting from a fractal and communicated with a ghost alien bearing a shroud who talks about fractals and the Universe and even hands him fractals. (Ritzmann 2011) Vallee's revelations clearly found a disciple here"

Jeff contacted me and pointed out that the source Marty used, Jeff Pritchett, did not accurately report what he had stated in his Paratopia podcast. Mr. Ritzmann added that Pritchett had stated this because of a personal vendetta and requested that I make sure that his statements are accurate before using them. I forwarded Jeff Ritzmann's objection to Mr. Kottmeyer and he responded that he had heard Ritzmann speak about his experience in a Paratopia broadcast but could not remember when it was. He found Mr. Pritchett's article and could see no reason why he would quote Ritzmann incorrectly. So, instead of going through hours of the various podcasts to find when Ritzmann had stated all of this, he simply accepted Pritchett's interpretation.

This is an example of, apparently, not getting the facts straight. The one thing I try to do in SUNlite is quote people accurately in order to make sure the reader understands what the individual stated. In this case, Mr. Kottmeyer and I did not make sure the statement was accurate and we should have gone to the real source of the statement. I will take Mr. Ritzmann's word for it that Pritchett stated what he did in order to paint Ritzmann in a certain light. I accept responsibility for allowing the error to appear and will endeavor to be more thorough in the future.

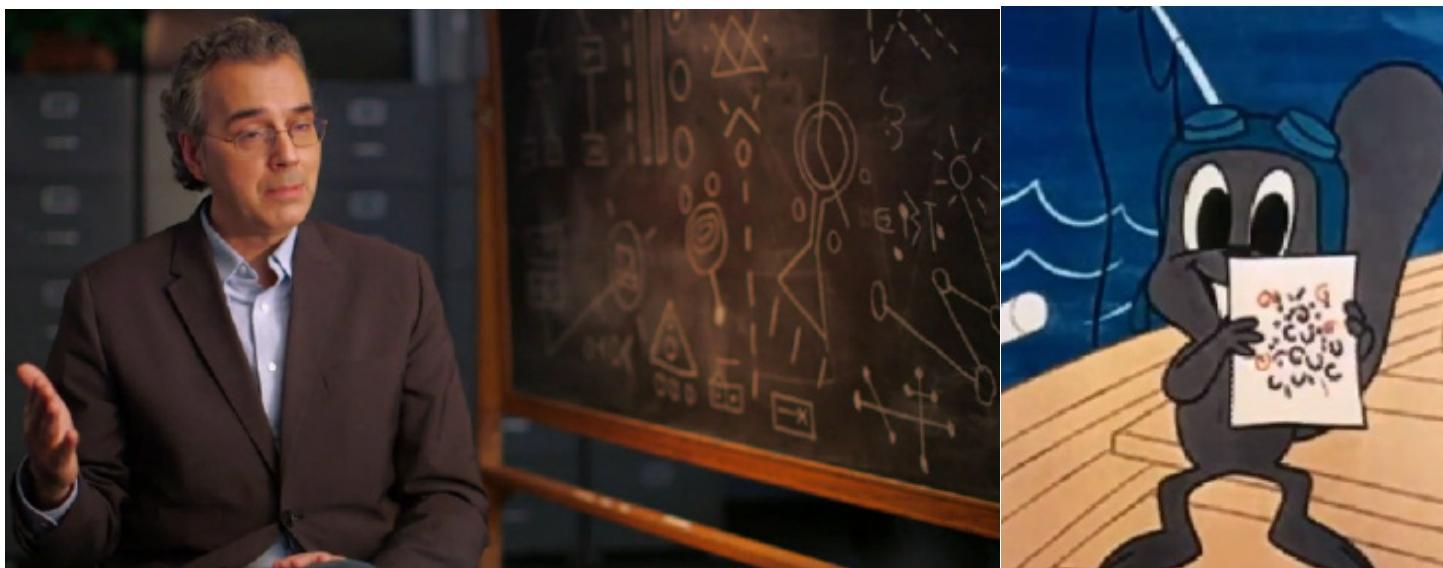
UFOs on the tube: Hanger One

According to MUFON's new web site, they are scientifically studying UFOs "for the benefit of humanity". One can argue about what they qualify as "scientific" but it is best to demonstrate how they want to "benefit humanity" by examining their latest production for television "Hanger 1".

Hanger One

The program has a regular cast of characters and a few "guests" on each program. The main cast is an interesting group of individuals, who can tell a good story but, after close examination, it is revealed that much of what they say is inaccurate. One can even make the case that they falsified data in order to promote their theories. Is this science?

One of the primary players in this charade is Richard Dolan, who is a prolific UFO writer with a style similar to Donald Keyhoe. Much of what he writes is exaggerated in order to promote his belief that there is an alien cover-up.



What is on the chalkboard by Richard Dolan? Fan mail from some flounder?

The next superstar is Grant Cameron, who runs the web site "Presidential UFO". He has promoted just about any conspiracy theory that connects UFOs to the president of the United States. This includes the MJ-12 documents. During the program, Cameron appears to have been filmed in a hallway. Was he not allowed inside Hanger one's offices?



Jan Harzan is MUFON's Executive Director and is the driving force of MUFON . He believes the following about their goal of "benefiting humanity":

It is literally a beacon to keep us on track to achieve something great through the daily words and actions of each and every member of MUFON. The words "The Scientific Study of UFOs for the Benefit of Humanity" are not to be taken lightly.¹

Based on Harzan's behavior on this program, I would suggest he is taking this statement extremely lightly in order to promote him-

self and his beliefs. Belief and self-promotion do not make good science and do not "benefit humanity".

The next UFO superstar is John Ventre, who is the lord of MUFON Pennsylvania's fiefdom. Ventre had suggested that there would be an "end of times" in 2012. Even more disturbing was that, in April of 2010, he decided to make public, one day later, that his daughter had an experience with "entities" in HIS home. Like all the other "talking heads" in this program, Ventre tends to exaggerate and sensationalize. He is a perfect "fit" for "Hanger one".

Another UFO expert seen on the program is Jason McClellan, who is an Open Minds magazine UFO writer. I have commented on some of his stories before in the "Who's blogging" section because they appeared to lack sufficient research.

An apparent newbie to this sort of thing was Jeremy Ray. He has the credentials as a MUFON STAR team member, claims to be a contactee , and is a member of the "international Starseed Network", which is an organization that professes to be helping humanity evolve both physically and spiritually. I had thought the original idea was that STAR team members would be objective and well trained. His comments on the program and his claim to being a contactee indicates that the qualifications for being a STAR team member have been significantly lowered. Perhaps getting the STAR team badge is more about MUFON politics instead of qualifications as a researcher/investigator.

A final entry into the fray was another newbie by the name of Dwight Equitz. He is an unknown "UFO researcher", who's only claim to UFO fame appears to be that he is an actor. Is he on the program for his acting ability or is he there because he has been studying UFOs for many years? As an actor, he will say or do just about anything as long as he gets paid. This became clear when he said things that made no sense or were just plain wrong. It seems, he was simply reading from a script put in front of him.

The source of these group's research centers around "Hanger One", where the nearly 70,000 MUFON files are supposedly kept. We are shown a warehouse with various researchers browsing through the case files. The size of the building implies something akin to a massive library or something like the warehouse in "Raiders of the lost ark". It is interesting to note that MUFON reports that its headquarters is at 3822 Campus Drive in Newport Beach, California (see the google image at lower left). This looks nothing like the image seen in the television program. There is no description of any other location that MUFON uses on their web site. This indicates there probably is no real "Hanger One" and this building is just a prop.

In an amusing side note, there is one scene where "top secret" files are being transported down the hallways of "Hanger one". The funny thing about this is that individual is heading for a door with the sign, "Assessor's Human Resources". Apparently, this is a crafty move. Nobody would think to look in the Human Resources department for top secret documents.

While MUFON can claim that the producers have a lot to do with what is presented on these programs, this is all endorsed by



Ike To Get Speech Date Bid Monday

WASHINGTON, Feb. 13 (R)—President Eisenhower will be invited Monday to attend a big Republican rally in California in April.

If he decides to go, Los Angeles County Republicans who want him to speak before their \$100 a plate dinner April 22, will have to change their date.

The President last Tuesday accepted an invitation to speak that day before the annual dinner of the American Newspaper Publishers Assn. in New York.

There have been rumors for several days that Eisenhower might visit Palm Springs, Calif., soon, perhaps as early as the latter part of next week. Asked about these rumors at the Eisenhower vacation headquarters in Thomasville, Ga., last night, Press Secretary James C. Hagerty replied:

"We will have no comment on that before returning to Washington."

Eisenhower Plans Palm Springs Trip



PRESIDENT AND PASTOR.—President and Mrs. Eisenhower congratulate the pastor, Dr. James Blackstone, of Community Church of Palm Springs, Calif., yesterday following services attended by them and their vacation hosts, Mr. and Mrs. Paul Helms, Los Angeles, standing behind Mrs. Eisenhower. (AP Wirephoto).

The president and Mrs. Eisenhower were praised by the Rev. Dr. J. H. Blackstone, Jr., at church services today for devotion to Christian principles and for inspiring "many, many thousands to think of righteousness."

The vacationing president and the First Lady attended services in the Protestant Community Church of Palm Springs, situated at the foot of San Jacinto Mountains.

Eisenhower appeared none the worse for a hurry-up trip he had to make to a local dentist last night. During dinner with his wife he chipped the porcelain cap of an upper front tooth and visited the home of Dr. F. A. Purcell for a quick repair job.

Eisenhower lost a cap on the same tooth during the 1952 campaign.

The president and Mrs. Eisenhower were accompanied to church by Mr. and Mrs. Paul H. Helms, at whose Smoke Tree Ranch here they are guests.

MUFON. They are the ones, who take credit for what is said and they must be held accountable for any inaccuracies they wish to promote.

Eisenhower's secret trip to Muroc/Edwards

The first program started with an incident involving President Eisenhower "disappearing" for a few hours when he was on vacation in Palm Springs, California. It is speculated that he went to Muroc AFB, where he could meet with aliens. This story can be traced back to the book, "The Roswell Incident" and is not based on anything that can be proven. The official story for his "disappearance" is that the president had knocked a cap off a tooth and had to go to a local dentist to get it repaired. There is no good reason to question this story but it does not take much to turn this into some sort of grand conspiracy.

According to John Ventre, nobody knew Eisenhower was even going to Palm Springs. This is not exactly true. Prior to February 14th, there were rumors he was going to Palm Springs². By the 15th, it was announced he was going.³

Actor, turned UFO researcher, Dwight Equitz, states that Eisenhower appeared 100 miles away the next morning in Los Angeles at a Church Service. One should research the script a lot closer before making such claims because the truth is that the church service was in Palm Springs (The Community Church of Palm Springs a few miles from where they were staying at the Smoke Tree Ranch according to the news media).⁴ If Equitz got his information from the MUFON files, it does not say much for the reliability of the information in those files. Adding to this conspiracy myth was John Ventre revealing that he had "witnesses" that state they knew Ike made a deal with the aliens! These unnamed witnesses may be the same sources used by William Moore in his book on Roswell. None of them are very credible.

Mandate 0463

The show then decides to present something called Mandate 0463 (dated 3 March 1954), which states that the existence of aliens is to be denied by all DOD departments/personnel. Does such a document really exist? The document states that it was created at the 2374th meeting of the DOD on March 1, 1954. The DOD was created September 18, 1947. There were 2356 days between these two dates. According to Jason Colavito's blog, some of the wording comes from the MJ-12 SOM-1 manual Chapter 5.⁵ This document looked fabricated and gives the impression that MUFON is promoting hoaxes. Where have I heard or seen this before? Is this the kind of research that benefits humanity?

MILITARY COUNCIL
Date: General
3 MARCH 1954

MANDATE 0463

Adopted by the Department of Defense at its 2374th meeting,
on 1 March 1954

To all Departments/Military Service Branches,

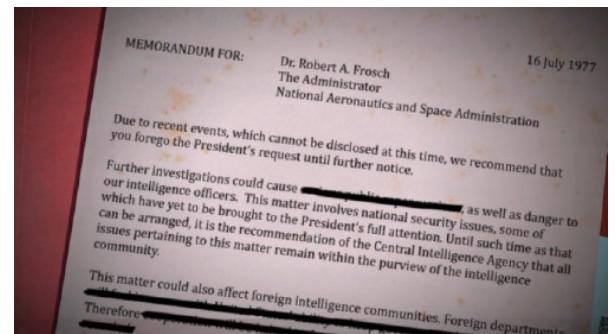
In conjunction with both those in the executive and judicial branches, this new classified policy (0463) in regard to extra-terrestrial encounters, must be adopted by all those in the United States government. This policy, MANDATE 0463, states that "under no circumstances are the general public or public press to learn about the existence of these entities, the official government policy is that such creatures do not exist."

JFK killed because of UFO secrets

For some reason, the MUFONites latched onto the launch of Cosmos 21, which was a failed Russian planetary probe that never made it out of its parking orbit due to an engine misfire. There was nothing really unusual about the satellite but Professor John Putman appeared on the program stating that "its true mission is unknown today".⁶ This may be true simply because the old Soviet records are not very complete. There appears to be enough evidence to conclude that it was a deep space probe that was supposed to return to earth.⁷ Suggesting the probe was some sort of mysterious spacecraft is not good history and Putman's misrepresentation catered to what the producers desired. This failed satellite launch seemed to spark JFK into sending a memo to the CIA ordering them to share UFO information with the USSR. The document they are referring to has a questionable provenance (it does not exist in the CIA files or JFK library) and appeared on the UFO scene through some questionable sources.⁸ There is a handwritten note on the document where it refers to MJ-12, which increases the likelihood that it is a hoax. The narrator is quick to point out that ten days later, JFK was assassinated. Is MUFON really suggesting that JFK was assassinated because UFO secrecy?

Jimmy Carter and George Bush

The rest of the episode about presidents and UFOs had to do with trying to make it appear that presidents, who wanted to discover the truth about UFOs, were stonewalled by some super secret group. Grant Cameron reports that when future President George H.W. Bush (who was the CIA director for one year) briefed the newly elected president Jimmy Carter, he told the president that he did not have a need to know the truth about UFOs! The funny thing about this story is that Carter had his own CIA director, Stansfield Turner, who replaced Bush in March of 1977. He could easily have told Carter what he wanted to know. Dolan then shares a story about his "friend" from the CIA, who saw Jimmy Carter very upset when he learned "the truth" about UFOs. If Dolan can't reveal his source, then he should not even mention it. He sounds like he simply made this up or his source did. Promoting this kind of rubbish as factual is just not what one would expect from a professional writer. It is more on the level of myth making than actually writing about history.



The program produced a very questionable looking document from the CIA to Robert French (NASA administrator) from 16 July 1977 telling them not to respond to the president's request about UFO studies. However, I don't see the word UFO appear in the document at all. Instead, the document focuses on intelligence gathering and requests that NASA not become involved at this time. It seems that MUFON was misrepresenting the document in question again.

Various individuals on the program concluded that President George H. W. Bush was part of MJ-12 and probably knows more about UFOs than any other president. This is because he had "oil money", political connections, and was director of the CIA. Ventre refers to him as the "gate keeper". Dolan states it was likely that Bush had CIA connections prior to being director. Not one fact is presented to support all these claims other than George Bush was the CIA director for just one year.

Antarctica UFO battle

In the second episode of the series, we discover, thanks to Grant Cameron, that the Nazis had an underground base in Antarctica. No proof is really offered but the program states that the US Navy's "Operation High Jump" in 1946 was sent to Antarctica to find this base. Michael Shratt, an "aerospace historian", stated several aircraft carriers were involved. The real truth of the matter is only one carrier (the USS Philippine Sea) was sent and it carried a load of RD-4 transport aircraft. If this were a strike force as implied by MUFON, there would have been several carriers and they would not be loaded with transport aircraft. Instead, they would have been loaded with fighters and bombers.

While in the Antarctic, the fleet supposedly engaged in a naval battle with a UFO resulting in many casualties and a rapid retreat by the US Navy. Again, this is all an exaggeration based on questionable sources. The actual operation Highjump went to Antarctica to set up a American air base (which is what the RD-4s on the USS Philippine Sea were for) and to learn how to operate in polar waters. There never was any battle with a UFO and the only casualties involved an airplane crash during a white out and damage to the USS Merrick's rudder when it got stuck in the ice. Because, the US Navy arrived late in the Antarctic summer and their ships were not really designed for this kind of environment, many of the ships had to leave with the onset of winter conditions. The only defeat the US navy experienced in the Antarctic had to do with the weather and not a UFO battle.

Admiral Byrd was in charge as mentioned by the program but what was not mentioned was that there were plenty of press along to report what happened. If there were a battle with a UFO, they would have been aware of it. The show also misquoted Admiral Byrd as describing craft that could attack the United States by going from pole to pole at incredible speed. The program had a

Byrd Warns of Pole Area Attacks

(Read Adm. Richard E. Byrd, America's foremost contemporary Polar explorer, believes that the United States must take every precaution to guard against future attacks from the "bottom" and "top" of the world if another war should come. The admiral's declaration was made in an exclusive interview with International News Service staff correspondent, Lee Van Atta who accompanied the fourth Polar expedition into Antarctica.)

By LEE VAN ATTA
I.N.S. Staff Correspondent

ABOARD U. S. S. MT. OLYMPUS, EN ROUTE HOME FROM ANTARCTICA, March 4.—(INS) Rear-Adm. Richard E. Byrd warned today that the United States must guard against any future invasion by hostile aircraft from across the Polar regions of the earth.

The admiral declared:

"It is no scare phrase but a bitter reality to state that conflict, should it ever come again, will lash at our nation over one or both poles."

His statement was made in a summation of his Polar achievements outlined in an exclusive interview with International News service.

U. S. SECURITY

Admiral Byrd sees as the most important result of the Antarctic expedition just completed immediate and far-reaching effects on American security. He declared:

"I voice a strong warning to my fellow-Americans when I say that we can no longer crawl into cocoons and believe that distance guarantees us safety; that oceans and poles will be our ever-protecting no man's land."

"Twenty years ago I brought two ships and less than 150

men and two airplanes into Antarctica on my first expedition to the pole.

"Then it was both a high and dangerous adventure; a rare experience.

BIGGER RECORD

"And here, not two decades later, a force 16 times larger in every respect than that expedition sweeps into Antarctica, completes its task in less than two months and leaves again, with a greater record of geographical discovery than we had been able to achieve during two chilling years at the pole.

"And the men who did it accept it as just another routine assignment.

"This comparison is self-evident: Since speed and progress seem to recognize no horizons, we must accelerate our thinking, our planning, our actions and our own horizons.

AT CROSSROADS

"We must do it now, for we are at an important crossroads in both military science and world survival."

Marshall Okeh of T

WASHINGTON, March 4—(AP)—Secretary of State Marshall told the Senate foreign relations committee today the "important fact" about four pending peace treaties is that in them "we make a beginning of peace."

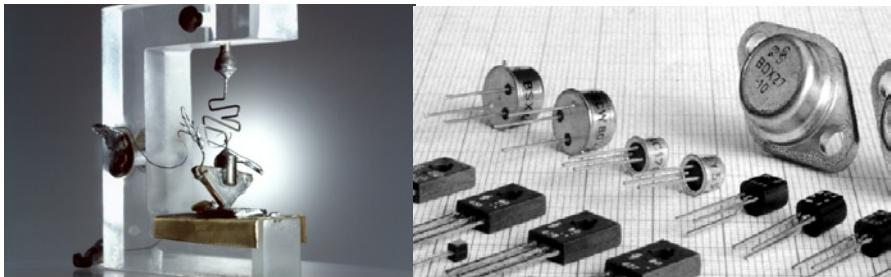
Urging speedy ratification of the treaties with Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary, the secretary of state asserted they represent the "composite judgment" of the nations arrayed on the Allied side during the war.

The terms, he said, were not

recording of Byrd stating this but if one looks at the fine print it states "Statement attributed to Admiral Richard E. Byrd". This is not a recording of Byrd's voice but a manufactured recording! Like the documents in the first episode, this was a hoax perpetrated on the audience. According to Wiki leaks, this was not what Byrd had stated and the Chilean newspaper, used as a source, had been translated incorrectly. Byrd had actually stated that the United States should be defended from planes flying from polar regions. I found a San Antonio light paper of March 4th, 1947, where the same reporter, who wrote the article for the Chilean source, quoted Byrd as saying, "*It is no scare phrase but bitter reality to state that conflict, should it ever come again, will lash at our nation over one or both poles.*"⁹ There is no mention of attacks being launched from pole to pole. Apparently, nobody bothered to check their sources for accuracy. Is this a shock?

Transistor technology

MUFON's efforts to rewrite human history continued with the Cape Girardeau crash story, which supposedly happened in 1941. The source of this story comes from Len Stringfield, who received a letter from Charlotte Mann. She stated that her grandfather, reverend Willam Huffman, had seen the crash and gave the "last rites" to a dying alien body. The military, as always, was quick on the scene and scooped up ever artifact. One of these important items supposedly went to Purdue University for reverse engineering. According to MUFON, this led to the breakthrough invention of the transistor.



The first transistor was developed in 1947 (left image) but does not even look like the modern transistor (right image)! The MUFONites chose to ignore the fact that it was developed at Bell labs and not Purdue University. Those responsible for the invention, William Shockley, John Bardeen, and Walter Brattain, had no apparent associations with Purdue University as all had their degrees from other colleges. The failure to link Purdue University with the development of the transistor leaves a gapping hole in this reverse-engineering claim.

The transistor, while a modern device, is archaic compared to modern IC chips. One can't even see the transistors on an IC chip because they are in the substrate. However, this is our modern technology, which is supposed to be hundreds of years behind the advanced spaceships that are flown by aliens. If one would find it difficult to create a transistor by looking at a modern IC chip, imagine the problems that would occur when trying to create a transistor from a piece of alien spaceship wreckage.

The idea that humankind acquired technology from aliens is one of those claims that implies that all the engineers and scientists that are credited with the development of that technology are frauds. Instead of "benefiting humanity", MUFON is trying to rewrite history to indicate that humanity is nothing more than a bunch of idiots incapable of doing something on their own.

Alien popcorn

In the alien technology episode, the wild claims of Philip Corso, who many Roswell proponents consider to be a fraudulent witness, were presented as if they had been proven. UFO expert, Jeremy Ray, stated that IC chips, fiber optics, night vision/stealth technology, and even microwaves come from the Roswell UFO crash. Of all of these, perhaps the most ridiculous claim is that microwave technology came out of the blue in 1947. The existence of microwaves were well known well before the Roswell incident. During World War 2, the SCR-584 radar had been developed and it used frequencies in the microwave range. If Ray was suggesting that the use of microwaves to cook food was discovered because of the Roswell crash, he is incorrect there as well. Raytheon filed a patent for such a device back in 1945. They built the first "radar range" in 1947 and there was even such a device available at Grand Central Terminal in January 1947, where commuters could heat up hot dogs on the run. One would think that these UFOlogists would look at the real history before trying to rewrite it. Despite the obvious history for all of this technology, Richard Dolan clings to the belief that this all came from alien spaceships. He nonchalantly states, "*This is a big piece of the puzzle that our official truth has sort of whitewashed out.*"¹⁰ When these individuals simply make all of this up, how can one really trust anything they say?

Element 115

Because it likes to cling to the most ridiculous claims in UFOlogy, the producers of this show gave credence to Bob Lazar. Lazar states that there were nine alien spacecraft stationed at Groom Lake's S-4 secret base and that aliens gave us the technology for anti-gravity. The key to this anti-gravity drive is element 115. John Ventre proclaimed, "So, now we finally discover element 115 in 2004. It has the exact properties that Bob Lazar said it had in 1989."¹¹ The actor turned UFOlogist, Dwight Equitz, would parrot this claim, "Everyone laughed when Lazar told us about element 115 and he turned out to be right about that. So, maybe we need to seriously consider his claim that the aliens actually gave us this element."¹² Was this newly discovered element the key to spaceflight as Lazar, Ventre, and Equitz claimed?

At the time of Lazar's claims, there was no element 115 on the periodic table. However, heavy elements were being synthesized for many years prior to Lazar presented his story and it was only a matter of time before element 115 would be created. Predicting its existence was not that great a stretch. What Lazar could not predict was the stability of the element. In his version, element 115 was a stable element because there was a predicted "island of stability" around element 115 at the time Lazar made his claims. However, he ignored the possibility that, like many of the recently discovered synthesized elements, element 115 would have a short half-life.

Contrary to what Equitz and Ventre state, element 115 does not have the characteristics that Lazar predicted. Ventre and Equitz did not even bother to look into the fact that Element 115 was discovered in 2003 and not 2004. Element 115's most stable isotope (Uup 289), which was discovered in 2009, has a half-life of about 200msec. This means that within one second, Element 115 would essentially decay away to Element 113. It is not stable and nobody has made the report there seemed to be "levitation/anti-gravity" characteristics. Lazar's claims were a hoax and, by promoting it, the MUFONites are complicate in this lie.

Ben Rich

I was not surprised to see that Lockheed's Ben Rich was the focus of one of the segments. According to Jan Harzan, he wrote a letter, which stated that there are two kinds of UFOs.¹³ There are those of ET origin and those that we manufacture. Those of ET origin had an impact on our development of our UFOs. However, the letter that is presented on the program does not state this. According to Peter Merlin's article in SUNlite 5-6, this was actually a letter to Testor Corporation model-kit designer John Andrews regarding the possibility of UFOs have an ET or man made source.¹⁴

What Harzan did not to mention was that Rich stated that there are far too many charlatans regarding UFOs and one had to be cautious. He also never stated that man-made UFOs came from Extra-Terrestrial UFOs. Is Harzan describing a different letter or is he just not telling the truth?

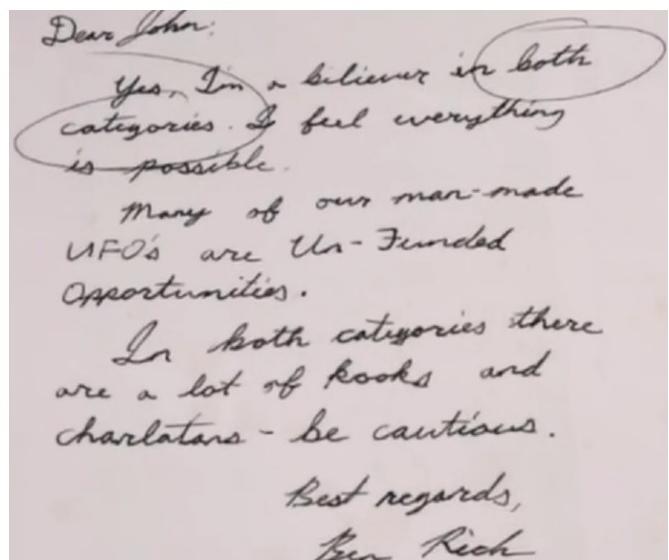
Harzan is probably referring to another source for his claims and not the letter that was presented on the program. This source was William McDonald, who apparently worked with John Andrews at Testor corporation. According to McDonald, Andrews contacted Ben Rich for him and confirmed the idea that we were manufacturing aircraft based on alien technology. Of course, McDonald did not reveal any of this until John Andrews conveniently died, which makes it suspect. At best, it is hearsay information. At worst, it is a lie by McDonald. There is not one written letter, tape recording, or even an e-mail that can be traced to Ben Rich. Like the Lazar story about element 115, it is, very likely, a hoax perpetrated by another person wanting attention from the UFO community.

If this kind of hearsay was not enough, the program plays a recorded statement that is attributed to Ben Rich:

*We already have the means to travel among the stars but these technologies are locked up in black projects and it would take an act of god to ever get them out for the benefit of humanity.*¹⁵

There is no source given for this statement and it is not Rich's voice. Supposedly, Jan Harzan heard Ben Rich say this after a speech he made in 1993 at UCLA. This makes it hearsay as well and not verifiable.

Jason McClellan would add his commentary and state, "According to Ben Rich we learned how to build our own UFOs by studying crash retrievals. Then he came right out and said that ETs have been in contact with our civilization and we have been pilfering their technology for more than 70 years."¹⁶ This appears to be sourced from Willam McDonald, which indicates that McClellan does not care if his



sources are reliable or not. He only cares about spreading rumors.

According to Peter Merlin, who has actually visited the Ben Rich archives to research all of this, Rich wanted to keep an open mind about all possibilities but never had any information about aliens being the source of UFO reports. He reflected about this in his speeches and letters. In the archives, there is no mention of any technology being pilfered from aliens or their crashed spaceships.

Iranian UFO crash

Another attempt to present evidence of alien technology being reverse engineered was MUFON's explanation of how the country of Iran was able to capture a highly sophisticated US drone aircraft in 2011. Jeremy Ray stated that it was captured by a UFO using anti-gravity technology and a tractor beam. His source is the mysterious scientist Dr. Mehran Keshe. Jeremy Ray goes on to imply that Keshe got this technology from a UFO crash that happened in 2004 in the mountain of Kerman.¹⁷

This UFO crash that was supposed to have occurred in 2004 actually occurred in January 2007 in the Barez mountains of Kerman (not the mountain of Kerman as Ray states) and probably was a meteor. There is no mention of a military presence in that report on January 10, 2007¹⁸:

Eyewitnesses told the Fars News Agency (FNA) that a radiant UFO had crashed in the Barez Mounts of Kerman on Wednesday morning. Abulghassem Nasrollahi, the Deputy General of the Kerman province in Iran told the news agency that all the aircraft in the area had been accounted for, but did not rule out the possibility that the object could be a meteor. Another source also told the FNA that the object was on fire with thick smoke coming from it, and claimed that this implied the object was not a meteor. However, meteors appear as bright fireballs in the sky, as they are heated to high temperatures due largely to ram pressure as they fall at high speeds through the Earth's atmosphere. Meteors often burn up completely before reaching the ground and some leave a smoke-like trail in their wake. Abulghassem noted that a few days earlier, in Rafsanjan, a similar incident was reported by witnesses.

This whole thing indicates that MUFON did not bother to get real information and created a myth from a news story they heard about. The Iranians claimed they used electronic jamming to exploit a weakness in the positioning technology to make the Drone think it was landing in Afghanistan and not Iran. They learned this by examining previous drones they had shot down. This seems much more plausible than the tractor beam theory. The United States said the Drone failed and "crash landed". This seems less plausible based on the lack of damage but it still more likely than the tractor beam theory. Until Keshe/MUFON present evidence of this UFO actually existing, it is just another one of those UFO legends that MUFON and UFO proponents are so fond of repeating in order to make people think they are true.

Technology addiction

In the final segment of the Alien Technology episode, there is a discussion of how humans have become addicted to the technology we have acquired from the Aliens. Jeremy Ray goes so far as to state that we should not have such access and compares it to little kids being given a box of matches. Jason McClellan implied that we have become so dependent on this technology for everything, people probably could not navigate their way across town without it. Both are exaggerating their point. Humans are much more adaptable and could learn to live without technology if it were necessary.

The show attempts to inform us that UFOs were reported near three power plants in August of 2003. Because the UFOs were close to these power plants, it is implied they caused the power outage of the northeast that occurred on August 14, 2003. Equitz states it was "total chaos" during the power outage and added, "It's easy to interpret these events as an act of aggression".¹⁹

A check of the MUFON database reveals only six UFO reports between August 13 and 14, 2003. None of these mentioned the UFOs being near power plants. Additionally, there is a reasonable explanation for the power outage and it was far from "total chaos". There was the loss of services and there were a few deaths (some unrelated to the outage) but there was no mass rioting or people suffering from mental anguish. Power was restored within a few days and the region quickly returned to normal.

To emphasize the point of our reliability on technology that the aliens might take away from us, the show quotes Carl Sagan:

*We've arranged a society based on science and technology, in which nobody understands anything about science and technology. And this combustible mixture of ignorance and power, sooner or later, is going to blow up in our faces.*²⁰

MUFON is actually quoting Sagan out of context because Sagan was referring to ignorance of technology and science by politicians and leaders. The actual statement was in an interview with Charlie Rose on May 27, 1996:

We've arranged a society based on science and technology, in which nobody understands anything about science and technology. And this combustible mixture of ignorance and power, sooner or later, is going to blow up in our faces. Who is running the science and

technology in a democracy if the people don't know anything about it?²¹

MUFON deliberately chose to leave out the last sentence and what he was describing. This is another attempt by MUFON to deceive the viewer. History has taught us that deception does not benefit humanity.

An on-line hoax?

The UFO crashes episode opened with an apparent UFO crash that occurred on December 12, 2009 in Barstow California. The funny thing about the story is that there is no evidence that it ever happened. The source of all this information came from an internet forum, where one individual talked about this "crash" and described supposed witnesses to it.²² It does not exist in the MUFON or NUFORC sightings databases. How can they really present a case without any evidence indicating that the events described actually happened?

A UFO crash that never existed

In a desperate attempt to promote just about any UFO crash, the MUFONites presented the April 17, 1897 Aurora, Texas as a factual event. The program pointed towards two witnesses, who were in their 80s and 90s when interviewed in the 1970s. They repeated the story about a crashing UFO and dead alien body that was buried in the local cemetery. That grave had a head stone with a UFO on it. When investigators tried to get permission to exhume the body, their request was rejected. However, shortly after this, the body and gravestone were mysteriously removed.

The truth is that this was all a hoax that was exposed long ago. Kevin Randle referred to it as the UFO crash story "*that won't die*".²³ Nobody even has a photograph showing this mysterious gravestone with the UFO on it. The continued promotion of such a case indicates that MUFON is more interested in story telling than scientific evidence.

South of the border UFO crash

According to legend, US air defense radar detected a UFO passing over the Gulf of Mexico on August 25, 1974. Instead of heading towards the United States, it shifted its course and disappeared near Coyame, Mexico not far from the US/Mexico border. At the same time, a civilian aircraft was lost over the area.

The Mexican military rapidly responded to these events and found the crashed airplane as well as a UFO that had collided with it. The CIA, interested in what was transpiring, intercepted the radio communications between the ground force and their headquarters. Eventually, they sent their own recovery force, which arrived in the area to find a bizarre scene of dead Mexican soldiers around the alien spaceship. Because they did not know how to handle such a thing, the Mexican government allowed the CIA to take the UFO off their hands. The UFO was then transported to Whiteman AFB in Kansas over a thousand miles away.

According to the program, MUFON investigated in 1992 through an anonymous report discovered by Ruben Uriarte. Uriarte supposedly found flight, communication, and radar logs that confirm all of this. He even discovered the names of four soldiers, which is supposed to be the "biggest find". The Mexican government denied these men ever existed.

The case, as presented, is really not accurate. I am unaware of any logs that confirmed the incident and MUFON presented no evidence other than the report, which was not discovered by Uriarte. It was actually given to Len Stringfield and Uriarte followed up on the case. A big question is why the alien spacecraft was unable to avoid a small civilian aircraft? A bigger question is how the US military was able to transport the UFO and alien bodies over public roads to Whiteman AFB, which is in Missouri (not Kansas as stated on the show)? Didn't anybody notice this and report it in the media? Speaking of the US military, where did the soldiers originate from to so rapidly respond to this event? None of these questions are even addressed. The story is based on rumor and very few facts. According to Kevin Randle, Uriarte and Torres, the principal investigators for this case, admit this²⁴ but MUFON presented this case as if it had been proven without a shadow of doubt. MUFON got so many of the details wrong that Noe Torres had to publicly complain about it in the UFO Updates Facebook page.

Acorn hunting

The crowning part of the crashed UFOs episode came when they promoted the Kecksburg case, which was explained long ago (See SUNLite 3-6). All the talking heads repeated the same mantra about the case²⁵:

Richard Dolan: *What everyone in the town of Kecksburg knows is that an enormous number of people, military, different types of branches of the military, probably over a hundred outside people came in, combed the woods, sealed off the woods from the public and yet, what is interesting is that there is no official acknowledgement by the military services that they did this type of a thing.*

Dwight Equitz: *Think about it...you see something happen with your own eyes. You know hundreds of military personnel swarmed this small town. Yet, this is outright denied by the government. When you get that kind of first hand look at how these cover-ups work, you are going to be hungry for the truth.*

Leslie Kean: "So.. the fact that all these people witnessed a physical object come down. Some saw it in the woods on the ground. Others saw it on the flatbed truck being taken away....means that there is a huge evidential thing that the US government has somewhere....So you have this very black and white contradiction between what the official line was and what actually happened...."

All three individuals seem to be unaware of the key details regarding the case. The truth is there were very few witnesses, who actually saw the UFO come down in the woods or actually saw the UFO on the flatbed. Most of these witnesses are dubious and did not come forward until after the main theme of the story had been established in the late 1980s thanks to Kecksburg UFO promoter Stan Gordon. For some reason, Kean, Dolan, Equitz, and the rest of MUFON crowd seem to be unaware of other witnesses (including the fire chief in 1965), who state much of the story being told is "made up". MUFON appears to have decided to ignore the real facts in favor of a fantasy.

At the end of the Kecksburg segment, the sad demise of John Murphy was presented. He had reported about the Kecksburg event on the radio. According to Kecksburg legend, Murphy gathered all the evidence from that evening and prepared to present the truth about the event on the radio. However, the night before he planned to expose everything, mysterious visitors show up to his office and had him alter the program he would later air. Where this information comes from is not stated and one must assume it is second hand, third hand, or assumption. Bob Young, who has heard the broadcast, pointed out that Murphy publicly stated on the program that he had not been influenced by any outside authorities and had received the cooperation of the state police and military.²⁶ One would think that Murphy would have retained a diary, journal, or some sort of file with all this important information. Instead, all we got to see was a "letter" that was supposedly written by Murphy, which stated that he was interested in reopening his investigation of the incident. According to MUFON, John Murphy was killed by an unknown hit-and-run driver a few days after this letter was written.

It is really convenient the program has the date, the addressee, and the author's name blacked out. I wonder why the actual date or the author's name was blacked out. Is it possible that this letter was not written around the time of Murphy's death? Is it even written by Murphy? Based on MUFON's track record, I would not be surprised if the letter was written by somebody else.

Since Murphy was apparently killed for his knowledge about Kecksburg, John Ventre states that there is a connection between UFO investigators dying and the UFO cover-up.

"There has been a long list of UFO investigators that have died under mysterious circumstances.....James E. McDonald....John Mack.....John Murphy.... it goes on and on....."²⁷

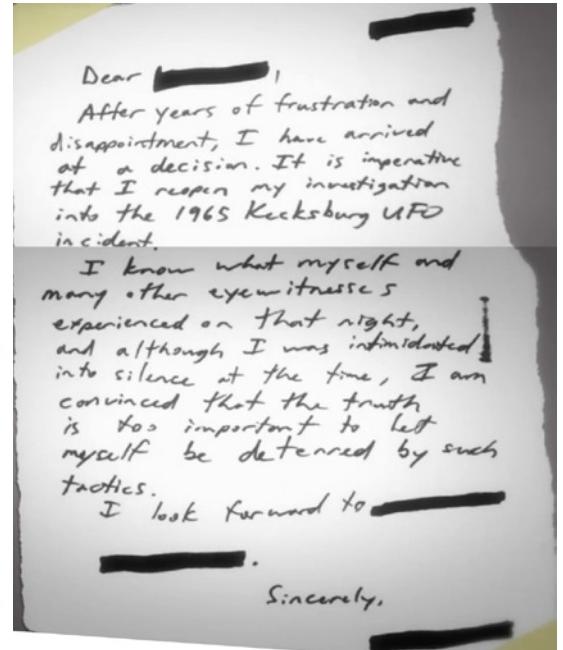
This is the worst kind of speculation. Poor Dr. McDonald committed suicide and there is no mystery to what transpired. Using his tragic death as a tool to promote wild conspiracy theories can be considered repugnant.

When stars become UFOs

The episode concerning UFO hotspots, started with a UFO event that happened in Blue Springs, Missouri. According to the program's presentation, Margie Kay, of Missouri MUFON, visited Blue Springs with a news team one night and they watched these "blue orbs" appear, hover, and jet away at incredible speeds and then come back. Jeremy Ray added an addition to this story:

In fact, the camera operator of a TV station refused to go back to work to do more filming because she was terrified.....²⁸

The actual events were reported by KCTV-5 on May 24, 2012 and their story seemed to be at odds with what was portrayed by the program. The article mentioned reports they had received about UFOs that had been seen by witnesses. This prompted Margie Kay to respond along with the news reporters. They held a sky watch and began to observe these orbs when the sky got dark. The one thing missing from their sky watch was an experienced astronomer (amateur or professional). This became clear when Margie Kay had problems figuring out if she was looking at the star Vega or not:



I am 90 percent sure we are looking at Vega in this instance, and there are some other planets out right now²⁹

When I read this, I had to wonder why she was only 90% sure and not 100%? A star chart is an elementary thing and one should be able to positively identify a star with no trouble if one knows how to use it. Apparently, MUFON does not even bother with a beginners astronomy class in their investigator's training. Her method of trying to identify it was typical of most UFOlogists. She decided to call a local MUFON "expert", who told her Vega is pure white. Because he said this, she rejected the idea that she was looking at Vega because:

That is not what we are seeing. We're seeing colors in this. I see green in this one and in the other I see red, green and blue....I don't think it's a planet at this point. I don't know what it is. It's unidentified.³⁰

Again, any amateur astronomer can explain to her that she was probably observing a star (probably Vega) that was scintillating. At least she could have taken a time exposure photograph of their UFO to see if it had diurnal motion. That would prove, beyond the shadow of doubt, that it was not a star.

In the KCTV-5 article, there was no mention of any camera operators being scared of what they saw or the reporter seeing something exotic. The events they saw were pretty mundane and probably were just stars scintillating. Missouri MUFON's inept investigation of this event was fuel for the producers of the program to make up details about what was seen. It would be no surprise that Jeremy Ray probably made up the story about the camera operator, who was so scared that she refused to go back to work.

Nuclear attraction

MUFON determined that the Hudson Valley, which suffered from a UFO "wave" from 1982 to 1987, was a very important UFO hotspot even though the UFOs have not returned in large numbers to this area in over twenty years. The "UFO wave" began on December 31, 1982, when a witness reported seeing a bunch of pulsating lights move across the sky that were, apparently, attached to a large craft that he could not see. Missing from this commentary was a film he shot of the UFO. According to the book, "Night Siege", this video showed something not quite so extraordinary.³¹ Only three main lights were visible with some fainter ones. Alone, this sighting is not that very compelling a case. However, there was a more widely seen event on March 24, 1983. This was reported by one observer as a gigantic "floating city" and was documented in "Night Siege". It is interesting that several of the witnesses described the lights shifting in formation, indicating that they were not attached to a single object. The November 1984 issue of Discover magazine offered a plausible explanation for this and it involved a formation of Cessnas flying out of nearby Stomville airport.³² This was never mentioned by the program's producers.

The purpose of mentioning the Hudson Valley flap was made clear when they discussed the July 14, 1984 Indian point Nuclear power plant sighting. On that night, security guards saw a huge craft hovering over the plant. Supposedly, the security cameras recorded the event. Guards "afraid" that the UFO might damage the reactor tried to point their guns at it. At that instant, alarms in the plant went off, which produced massive panic. The UFO only disappeared when the military arrived to investigate.³³

The program, as always, had problems with the facts and their reporting of what happened. According to "Night Siege", the date was actually July 24th. That book's authors interviewed the security guards a few months later but they made no mention of alarms going off or the UFO reacting to them pulling their weapons. They did mention that the security systems at the plant had shutdown but that is not quite the same thing as described by MUFON's finest. The episode was also misleading in that they showed the security guards dressed up like soldiers and carrying automatic weapons. These were private security guards and probably only carried sidearms. While there was a report of a UFO being seen, there is no evidence that it caused any significant disruption at the plant.³⁴

With the interference of a nuclear power plant established with this incident, Harzan goes on to report that many nuclear power plants in the United States experienced similar events. Jason McClellan went on to add that the energy from these plants might act as a "beacon" into space. Even stranger, was the comment by John Ventre who drew the ridiculous conclusion that the UFOs were monitoring the reactors or sucking energy from them.³⁵

While this kind of speculation might fool those who are not educated about nuclear power plants, the truth of the matter is that it is a bunch of nonsense. Nuclear reactors produce the same kind of electricity as conventional power plants. The only difference is they use a nuclear reactor to generate the heat that produces the steam to drive the turbines generating the electricity. The reactor is in a shielded facility that cuts down the neutron and gamma radiation emitted to near background levels. The further one goes from this location, the lower the strength of the radiation. To say they are emitting beacons of radiation into space indicates that McClellan never bothered to research this. Ventre's idea that they are sucking nuclear energy is also dim-witted rubbish for the same reason. Finally, Harzan's claim ignores all the land based prototypes, nuclear submarines and surface vessels operated by the United States Navy. I don't ever recall hearing my fellow nuclear sailors and submariners stating they had experienced a UFO sucking power from them or interfering with their operations. Do UFOs ignore the military's nuclear reactors in favor of civilian ones?

Nukes without UFOs

If UFOs and nuclear power plants wasn't enough, the program also mentioned the 2010 Warren AFB missile shutdowns. According to MUFON, they received reports from on duty personnel, who saw a huge cigar shaped object over the base. According to Harzan, we lost control of 50 missiles. Jeremy Ray would add, "If we don't have control of those missiles, who does?"³⁶

In SUNlite 2-6, I reported about this incident and knew that MUFON or Robert Hastings would make something out of the shutdown (which was caused by an electrical/computer fault). Shortly after the event, I conducted a search of the MUFON database and discovered that there were no UFO reports from that region even though there were some fourteen reports made on that date in other parts of the country. The same can be said for the NUFORC database, which, even today, has no reports listed from the area. If the UFO was so easily seen, it would have been seen by people outside the military base and in the countryside where all the missile silos were located. MUFON's source of these reports are nothing more than the usual rumors collected by Robert Hastings and not based on anything tangible.

If Harzan and Ray wonder who was in control of these nuclear weapons, the answer is simple. They were in control of the USAF but could not be launched. The implication that the UFOs could launch them is just more absurdity being perpetuated by uninformed "experts" from MUFON.

Buggy videos

In addition to presenting the idea that nuclear energy/weapons attract UFOs, MUFON also had determined that fault lines fascinate the alien invaders. To emphasize this point, John Ventre highlighted a November 2012 video showing a UFO moving about the Denver skyline:

His video seemed to show that a UFO was launching and landing somewhere in the city. It was displaying such astronomical movements that it defied gravity and physics.³⁷

What was not reported by Ventre was this case was closed long ago. However, it was not closed the way MUFON closes a case by leaving it unexplained. Instead skeptics closed this case by actually going to the site and recording the same types of UFOs. They were just bugs.³⁸ Ventre chose to ignore this explanation in favor of the more spectacular alien spaceship that nobody, except this cameraman, in the city of Denver saw land or take off despite it being a perfectly clear day.

Red Bull predicts earthquakes

Since MUFON was promoting the idea that fault lines attract UFOs prior to earthquakes, they moved to the most likely earthquake site in California. MUFON went so far as to suggest that a massive earthquake was going to occur in the region soon. Their evidence for this theory was the December 2010 Santa Monica fireball UFOs. At the time, it was referred to as "the silver surfer" UFOs and was recorded by multiple people over the area. Because of these widespread recordings, the source was quickly identified and the case was explained. The "silver surfers" were actually red bull parachutists, who were jumping at night with flares attached to their legs.³⁹ For some reason, these MUFON representatives still considered this an unsolved case. Either they are completely uninformed about this event, are not willing to admit they might be wrong, or are lying to the audience.

Shooting down a meteor?

In the sixth episode, MUFON decided to promote the idea that the Chelyabinsk fireball was shot down by some sort of space weapon. Jeremy Ray elaborated on this theory using a video that was played while he spoke:

Why did this asteroid suddenly break up fifteen miles above the Earth's surface? When you look closely at this footage it does seem like something collides with the asteroid. It goes through it from the left and comes out through the right. To me this is an indication that this might be a space-based weapon.⁴⁰

It is no surprise that Ray did not do any homework on this. Large meteors break up during their entry into the Earth's atmosphere all the time and it is not as unusual as he seems to imply. Additionally, the program presented an altered video instead of the real one. The actual video shows the car making a gradual turn to the right on the road, which is an indicator as to why there appeared to be something moving across the field of view. The camera was inside the car imaging through the window, which means any reflections on the window would also appear to move towards the right. Somebody performed an analysis of the video and demonstrated it was a reflection on the windshield.⁴¹ With all of MUFON's scientific advisors, one would expect them to reach that conclusion as well or,



Depiction of Chelyabinsk Footage

at least, address this issue on the program. Either their scientists concluded that it was a missile or Ray ignored the conclusion that it was a reflection in order to perpetuate a mystery. If this is an example of MUFON's finest, then MUFON has a long way to go before it begins to "benefit humanity" in any way.

MUFON's legacy

After the first six episodes, I tired of watching the show's misleading and inaccurate reporting. The UFOlogical "experts" on the show, which includes Jan Harzan, seem to be either uninformed or deliberately misleading the audience. It does not portray MUFON as a scientific organization at all. I am sure there are some MUFON members/UFOlogists that find this show an embarrassment but MUFON is not listening to them.

In 2013, certified STAR team member, Antonio Paris told Jack Brewer what Harzan could do to fix MUFON:

After two years at MUFON, I quickly realized several problems that can be easily fixed by Mr. Harzan. The first and most important mission for Mr. Harzan is to ensure MUFON recalibrate its compass. After attending dozens of MUFON conferences nationally, for example, it is clear that MUFON has been inundated with topics that have nothing to do with Ufology – it is intoxicated with conspiracy theories, hoaxes, junk science, new age claptrap and a level of sensationalism that would make The National Enquirer envious. His first goal, therefore, should be to drain the swamp of all this garbage and bring the science back to the subject.⁴²

It is clear that Harzan has ignored such sage advice and has chosen to hitch MUFON's wagon to the philosophy of sensationalist headlines that intoxicates the audience but proves nothing. MUFON's motto is not researching UFOs to benefit humanity. Instead, it should be to conceal or alter evidence to benefit themselves.

Notes and references

1. Harzan, Jan. "Our purpose for being". Jan's Corner. February 2014. Available WWW: <http://www.mufon.com/24/post/2014/02/our-purpose-for-being.html>
2. "Ike to get speech date bid Monday". Big Spring Herald. Big Spring, Texas. February 14, 1954. Page 4.
3. "Eisenhower plans Palm Springs trip". Council Bluffs Nonpareil. Council Bluffs, Iowa. February 15, 1954. Page 1.
4. "Dulles to report to Eisenhower on talks Wednesday". The Post-Standard. Syracuse, New York. February 22, 1954. Page 1.
5. Colavito, Jason. "Review of Hangar 1: UFO Files S01E01 "Presidential Encounters". Jason Colavito blog. Available WWW: <http://www.jasoncolavito.com/1/post/2014/03/review-of-hangar-1-ufo-files-s01e01-presidential-encounters.html>
6. Hanger 1: Presidential encounters. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. February 28, 2014.
7. Zak, Anatoly. "Flight beyond the ecliptic". Russian Space Web. Available WWW: http://www.russianspaceweb.com/3mv_kosmos21.html
8. Wolchover, Natalie. "CIA Cover-up Alleged in JFK's 'Secret UFO Inquiry'. Life's little mysteries. Available WWW: <http://www.livescience.com/33224-new-declassified-memos-jfk-kennedy-ufos-assassination.html>
9. Van Atta, Lee. "Byrd warns of pole area attacks". The Light. San Antonio, Texas. March 4, 1947. Page 1.
10. Hanger 1: Alien Technology. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 14, 2014.
11. ibid.
12. ibid.
13. ibid.
14. Merlin, Peter E. "Taking E.T. Home: Birth of a Modern Myth". SUNlite 5-6. November-December 2013. Pages 17-19.
15. Hanger 1: Alien Technology. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™

Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 14, 2014.

16. ibid.
17. ibid.
18. "Iranian news agency reports UFO has crashed in Kerman province". Wikinews. Available WWW: http://en.wikinews.org/wiki/Iranian_news_agency_reports_UFO_has_crashed_in_Kerman_province
19. Hanger 1: Alien Technology. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 14, 2014.
20. ibid.
21. "Carl Sagan's last interview". Science Documentaries. Available WWW: <http://science-documentaries.com/?p=685>
22. "Breaking: UFO lands on highway in Barstow, CA. 12/12/09". Maya 2012 and beyond forum. Available WWW: <http://maya12-21-2012.com/2012forum/index.php?topic=8242.0>
23. Randle, Kevin. "Aurora, Texas - A Story That Won't Die". A different perspective. March 27, 2005. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2005/03/aurora-texas-story-that-wont-die.html>
24. Randle, Kevin. The Coyame UFO crash. A different perspective. November 2, 2013. Available WWW: <http://kevinrandle.blogspot.com/2013/11/the-coyame-ufo-crash.html>
25. Hanger 1: Crashes and Cover-ups. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 21, 2014.
26. "Object in the woods". WHJB radio transcript of the 30th anniversary about Kecksburg Incident. November 29, 1995 1:05-3:00 PM.
27. Hanger 1: Crashes and Cover-ups. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 21, 2014.
28. Hanger 1: American Hotspots. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 28, 2014.
29. Oberholtz, Chris and Dave Jordan. "UFOs over Blue Springs? Strange objects hover in night sky". KCTV5 Kansas City, Missouri. May 24, 2012. Available WWW: <http://www.kctv5.com/story/18613289/ufos-over-blue-springs-strange-objects-hover-over-night-sky>
30. ibid.
31. Hynek, J. Allen, Philip J. Imbrogno with Bob Pratt. Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO sightings. Ballantine Books. New York and Toronto. 1987. P. 6-7.
32. Discover Magazine
33. Hanger 1: American Hotspots. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 28, 2014.
34. Hynek, J. Allen, Philip J. Imbrogno with Bob Pratt. Night Siege: The Hudson Valley UFO sightings. Ballantine Books. New York and Toronto. 1987. P. 143-153.
35. Hanger 1: American Hotspots. Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. March 28, 2014.
36. ibid.
37. ibid.

38. "Examining the UFO Claims of FOX 31 News". [Rocky Mountain paranormal research society](http://www.rocky-mountainparanormal.com/foxufo/). Available WWW: <http://www.rocky-mountainparanormal.com/foxufo/>
39. "Manu Ginobili's Santa Monica Silver Surfer" [Contrail Science](http://contrailscience.com/manu-ginobilis-santa-monica-silver-surfer/) December 11, 2010. Available WWW: <http://contrailscience.com/manu-ginobilis-santa-monica-silver-surfer/>
40. [Hanger 1: Space Weapons](#). Mitch Marcus. Go Go Lucky entertainment in association with Philo entertainment for the H2™ Network. 2014. H2™ Channel. April 4, 2014.
41. AB video stories. "Was Chelyabinsk meteor shot by UFO or rocket? Debunked!" [Youtube](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sdTSiRZ6xk). Available WWW: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sdTSiRZ6xk>
42. Brewer, Jack. "MUFON: Science and deception part one.." [The UFO Trail](http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2013/07/mufon-science-and-deception-part-one.html). July 30, 2013. Available WWW:<http://ufotrail.blogspot.com/2013/07/mufon-science-and-deception-part-one.html>

LINDA CORTILE & Nighteyes

by Luis Gonzalez

Sean F. Meers has devoted a long reply (updated September 12, 2013) to disprove the alleged similarities between Linda Cortile's abduction and a science-fiction novel published some time before the alleged abduction by Garfield Reeves-Stevens, *Nighteyes*¹. This shorter article is my contribution to the debate.

Alleged Similarity #01 – *Linda was abducted into a UFO hovering over her high-rise apartment building in New York City <-> Sarah was abducted into a UFO hovering over her high-rise apartment building in New York City.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Sarah was abducted (as it was later found out) into a UFO seen once slowly ascending in the vicinity of the high-rise apartment of his ex-husband in New York City. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, a woman is abducted from a high-rise apartment in New York City.

Alleged Similarity #02 – *Dan and Richard initially claimed to have been on a stakeout and were involved in a UFO abduction during early morning hours <-> Early in "Nighteyes" two government agents were on a stakeout and became involved in a UFO abduction during early morning hours.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Dan and Richard initially claimed just to have been parked in their patrol car (later they revealed it was an unmarked car) under the underpass of the elevated FDR Drive (without giving details or reasons)... THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, two government officers at work got involved in an abduction.

Alleged Similarity #03 – *Linda was kidnapped and thrown into a car by Richard and Dan <-> Wendy was kidnapped and thrown into a van by Derek and Merrill.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Wendy was coerced (not thrown) into a van by the threat of a gun held by Merrill. Derek never left the driver's seat. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, two people were involved in the incidents even if the procedure was not exactly the same.

Alleged Similarity #04 – *Linda claimed to have been under surveillance by someone in a van <-> Vans were used for surveillance in "Nighteyes".*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Linda and his bodyguard, both claimed to have seen unmarked gray surveillance vans and their occupants <-> Different kind of vehicles (marked and unmarked) were used in the novel for surveillance NOT of one female civilian but to monitor multiple FBI agents. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, suspects/witnesses are followed from non-identified vehicles.

Alleged Similarity #05 – *Dan is a security and intelligence agent <-> Derek was an FBI agent.*

In this case, Meers does not even deny the similarity. Instead, he points to the opposite roles of both: Dan's feelings towards Linda were not healthy, romance based love; instead he was a dangerous antagonist. In the novel Derek and Wendy were in love and Derek was never violent towards Wendy, he was a heroic protagonist. The solution is simple: Change Dan by Richard in the sentence... THE SIMILARITY IS VALID.

Alleged Similarity #06 – *Dan is hospitalized for emotional trauma <-> One of the government agents in "Nighteyes" was hospitalized for emotional trauma.*

According to Meers, there are no statements provided anywhere in *Nighteyes* that indicate any agent was hospitalized for emotional trauma. The closest suggestion is when Special Agent Cyrus North was in the infirmary recovering from the procedure of chemical interrogation. He was able to reveal a new memory, but there is no indication that he was emotionally affected by it, and in any case, the stories are quite different. SIMILARITY DISMISSED.

Alleged Similarity #07 – *During the kidnapping Dan took Linda to a safe house <-> During the kidnapping Derek took Wendy to a safe house.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: During the kidnapping Dan took Linda to a beach house (nowhere is that house either stated or implied to be a safe house) trying to prove she was a half breed human <-> During the kidnapping Derek (and Merrill) took Wendy (and two other men) to a safe house. Wendy was not their main objective, Derek just

didn't want to leave any witnesses. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, government agents take the abductee away, and it would be reasonable to infer from the account in Hopkin's book that the beach house was indeed a 'safe house' whether officially sanctioned or not.

Alleged Similarity #08 – *The safe house Linda visited was on the beach <-> In "Nighteyes", one safe house was on the beach.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: The house Linda was carried unwittingly to was on the beach <-> In "Nighteyes", the safe house on the beach was subjected to alien abduction activity but it was NOT the one to where Wendy and others were taken. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID in the most literal sense, as Meers so much likes. Despite so, I do not consider it much worthy.

Alleged Similarity #09 – *Before her kidnapping, Linda contacted Budd Hopkins about her abduction <-> Before her kidnapping, Wendy contacted Charles Edward Starr about her abduction.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Wendy, reassured by her father, reluctantly went with him and both spoke to Starr in his apartment about how Wendy and her mother had been picked up by something and the mother disappeared. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, both witnesses contacted an ufologist and later were abducted by government agents; if they did so voluntarily or reluctantly is not relevant.

Alleged Similarity #10 – *Budd Hopkins is a prominent UFO abduction researcher living in New York City and an author who has written books on the topic <-> Charles Edward Starr was a prominent UFO abduction researcher living in New York City and an author who had written books on the topic.*

In this case, Meers does not even deny the similarity. Instead, he points to the opposite roles of both: Hopkins is NEITHER an alien abductee (but he himself suggested that possibility in his autobiography and, in any case, other researchers such as Sprinkle and Fowler had admitted so) NOR an emissary who works for aliens (well, he would have said that, wouldn't he). THE SIMILARITY IS VALID.

Alleged Similarity #11 – *Linda and Dan were abducted at the same time and communicated with each other during their abductions <-> Wendy and Derek were abducted at the same time and communicated with each other during their abductions.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Linda and Dan were abducted once at the same time. Linda communicated with Dan (and the two others) during the abduction, even if cryptically and telepathically <-> Wendy and Derek were abducted many times at the same time and communicated with each other (not using telepathy) during their abductions. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, even more so if you change Dan by Richard, because in Hopkins' book it is clearly implied that Linda and Richard did share many abductions. And there were some doubts expressed (easy to resolve nowadays) about who really was the father of Linda's boy.

Besides, Meers dismissed the novelty of the idea of abductees communicating during their experiences. To do so, he offers just one example, Witley Strieber and his father, forgetting that the novelty was, in any case, that the abductees who communicate did not know each other before.

Alleged Similarity #12 – *Linda thought she "knew" Richard previously <-> Wendy "knew" Derek previously.*

According to Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Richard suspected he knew Linda previously; consciously, she only recalled a childhood imaginary friend named "Mickey". Nitpicking. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, the crucial feature of shared childhood abductions coincided.

Alleged Similarity #13 – *Dan expressed a romantic interest in Linda <-> Derek became romantically involved with Wendy.*

According to the objections made by Meers, the correctly-worded similarity would have been: Richard expressed a romantic interest in Linda... THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID. Nothing betrays it more than Meers's final words after describing Dan's paranoid obsession with Linda: "Thankfully, due to Richard's intervention, Dan's plan failed"... as it would in any good fiction.

Alleged Similarity #14 – *Dan and Richard felt considerable vibration during the close encounter <-> During the UFO landing in "Nighteyes" there was much vibration.*

According to Meers, three separate, documented firsthand sources reported a "static cling sensation" NOT a vibration as described by Stefula undocumented claim that Linda told him so. SIMILARITY DISMISSED, as Linda's words cannot be exactly quoted and documented. In any case, the UFO vibration in "Nighteyes" is a typical feature of fictional ufo encounters since CE3K, and a learned

witness such as Linda's would be familiar with that fact.

Alleged Similarity #15 – *Photographs of Linda were taken on the beach and sent to Hopkins <-> In "Nighteyes", photographs taken on a beach played a central role.*

In this case, Meers does not even deny the similarity. Instead, he points to the opposite roles of both. Dan photographed Linda as she was running away and he was chasing her (quite a difficult and absurd distraction at the moment, don't you think?). In the novel, photographs were taken of the aliens by a reporter hiding out. But remember, Dan suspected Linda was half-alien. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID

Alleged Similarity #16 – *The letter from "the third man" warned of ecological problems and potential harm to world peace if there was interference <-> Wendy was racing world disaster in "Nighteyes".*

In this case, Meers dismiss the similarity because, when the letter was finally published in its entirety in 1996 (3 years AFTER Hansen's criticism), it contained no warnings of ecological problems or potential harm to world peace. That is true, but Meers curiously overlooks how all Linda's story is packed with ecological warnings that she, as the "Lady of the Sands", would confront. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, even if Stefula wrongly described a letter he could only know secondhand.

FINAL SCORE: 14 Similarities still valid. 2 dismissed. A 111-page document and 26 "Facts" that disprove nothing.

And, what about the similarities NOT mentioned by Hansen. As I myself wrote years ago in Ufo Updates (and got no comments except for suggesting that maybe Reeves-Stevens was himself a "silent abductee"):

The three main points in Linda Cortile's abduction (proclaimed as such by Budd himself) were:

- (a) *Abductee speaking alien tongue,*
- (b) *Abductee working with the aliens,*
- (c) *Sexual bonding since childhood between pairs of abductees.*

All were written several months before the alleged abduction. This is, at least, clear evidence of a sociological influence or, in the worst scenario, proof of a hoax.

The most amazing point made in Hopkins' book, the cornerstone of Linda Cortile's case was how the aliens had orchestrated the lives of two abductees in order to reunite them one night in lower Manhattan for an apocalyptic message. The main surprise of "Nighteyes" (besides the aliens being humans) is when two apparently independent abductees met again, in order to become the founders of a future race. How can anybody miss the parallelism?

My argument is not about similarity of details (the dissimilarities always outnumber the similarities) but about similarity of themes. Something like comparing Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" with "West Side Story". We, skeptics, are in a no-win position. If we point to similar details, believers argue that we should not pick details but see broader. When we see broader and discuss main themes, believers ask for a perfect reproduction of details.

In any case, all this not necessarily points to a conscious hoax. You can argue about cryptoamnesia or, given Budd Hopkins's talent for leading, it would be interesting to know if he, not Linda, were the original reader of *Nighteyes*.

NOTES:

1. "The Facts Regarding the Alleged Sixteen Similarities Between the Linda Cortile Case and the Science-Fiction Novel *Nighteyes*" www.lindacortilecase.com.

'Nighteyes' and the Linda Legend

By Peter Brookesmith

ACCORDING TO *Witnessed*,¹ Linda 'Cortile' Napolitano first contacted Budd Hopkins by mail on 26 April 1989, to say she suspected she was an 'abductee'. She began sessions of hypnotic regression with him on 10 May following. On 30 November that year she was allegedly abducted—and floated through the closed window of her bedroom up to waiting UFO—by aliens. The event was witnessed by two *soi-disant* security guards or intelligence agents, plus a 'Third Man', hinted privately by Hopkins to have been Javier Perez de Cuellar, then Secretary General of the United Nations.

A few months before this historic event, in April 1989, Canadian author Garfield Reeves-Stevens had published a science-fiction novel, *Nighteyes*,² whose main theme is alien abductions, and the obtuseness of the authorities (mainly the FBI) in failing to understand what is happening. The abductees, it turns out, are tangled up in an alien programme to save a part of humanity (specifically 300 of them) from the imminent destruction of the Earth. These individuals must be saved, as the aliens are their time-travelling descendants. That's the trouble with time travel. If no ancestors, then no descendants.

In 1993 came publication by private circulation of *A Critique of Budd Hopkins' Case of the UFO Abduction of Linda Napolitano*, by Joseph J. Stefula, Richard D. Butler, and George P. Hansen (SBH).³ It contained 16 alleged similarities between Reeves-Stevens's novel and the Napolitano abduction-and-aftermath saga, as related by Hopkins in various publications and presentations and in 1996, in great detail, in *Witnessed*. In February 2012, Sean F. Meers published a web page⁴ that attempted to repudiate SBH's contention that the Linda legend owed much to themes and scenes in *Nighteyes*. Then came a short paper by Luis Gonzalez (written in February 2014, of which he kindly let me see a pre-publication draft) in which he offers several rebuttals to Meers's objections to SBH's list of resemblances. The present foray is a reflection and expansion on these competing contentions.

General and specific

It has to be said that most of Meers's remarks, besides being made at enormous and tedious length, are really very picky and pedantic—for instance he quibbles over whether Sarah's abduction in *Nighteyes* is from her own or her ex-husband's apartment building, and whether the UFO was apparent at the time (her husband certainly saw it leaving). SBH's parallel—*Linda was abducted into a UFO hovering over her high-rise apartment building in New York City [cf.] Sarah was abducted into a UFO hovering over [her] high-rise apartment building in New York City*—is valid enough. Likewise with most of the similarities detected by SBH but irksome to Meers. In contrast, Luis Gonzalez notes the general pattern of resemblance between episodes and settings in the Linda legend and those in the novel, and to that extent confirms the SBH hypothesis—for example, the crucial role of a beach house in both, or the protagonists' being kidnapped (by bad guys, not by aliens) amid their sundry adventures, or their feeling strange sensations before and during an abduction.

Meers nit-picks over the parallels between Hopkins and the fictional ufo-logical author Charles Edward Starr (an abductee and clandestine emissary for the aliens)—and proves nothing by it. But SBH missed a distinct similarity between the two: the career-switching of both Hopkins and Starr from successful occupations into full-time abductology and authorship. And it could be said that Hopkins was indeed an 'emissary' for the aliens, in the sense that he was an energetic proselytizer for the reality of abductions and the alien hybridization programme.

Gonzalez, in my view, might have expanded his comments on the Third Man's letter. SBH put the comparison thus: *The letter from "the third man" warned of ecological problems and potential harm to world peace if there was interference [cf.] Wendy was racing world disaster in "Nighteyes".* Gonzalez says of this:

In this case, Meers dismisses the similarity because, when the letter was finally published in its entirety in 1996 (3 years AFTER Hansen's criticism), it contained no warnings of ecological problems or potential harm to world peace. That is true, but Meers curiously overlooks how all Linda's story is packed with ecological warnings that she, as the "Lady of the Sands", would confront. THE SIMILARITY IS STILL VALID, even if Stefula wrongly described a letter he could only know secondhand.

The Third Man (TTM)'s letter (full of slightly glutinous references to Linda's loveliness and a use of quotation marks one usually associates with crank epistles) does say "The excitement of having our very own 'Lady of the Sands' is heartwarming, to say the least", from which we can only infer that TTM is endorsing Linda's ecological warnings—which, incidentally, included the novel assertion that crustaceans include basalt in their diet—a truth unknown to marine biologists and which was apparently never checked by Hopkins. These certainly give the impression she saw herself, like Wendy in the novel, "racing world disaster". And TTM writes "It shan't be long before the Earth becomes whole again", which surely implies ecological/environmental concern, even as it exudes a New Age-y flavour one wouldn't readily associate with Perez de Cuellar.

While there are no *warnings*, as such, of ecological doom, then, there is support for its possibility. It is equally possible that, when describing it to Stefula, Linda—rarely one to shrink from limelight—interpreted TTM's letter (chinese-whispered it) in the way SBH account for it. If Linda was party to a hoax, whether actively or passively, she would also have every reason at this stage to warn *anyone* off trying to track down TTM; she may deliberately have reported the letter inaccurately. And, to be blunt as well as cynical, we cannot be certain that the letter she saw is or was the same letter that Hopkins printed in *Witness*.⁵

The main significance, it seems to me, of the Third Man letter is that it represents a dramatic, adaptive inversion of one of *Nighteyes'* basic themes. In the novel, the powers-that-be have no suspicion that they are dealing with people involved in alien abductions, and these victims rather wish the government and its agencies did know and would do something about it. This is itself an ironic inversion of the so-called Cosmic Watergate: in *Nighteyes*, even the super-secret, super-efficient National Reconnaissance Office [which in UFO mythology surely knows *all* about aliens], interprets a photo of a landed alien craft as depicting a stealth-equipped Soviet hovercraft; and so officialdom never does discover the awful Truth, not even as the world comes to an end. Whereas: one interpretation of the Linda legend repeatedly stressed by Hopkins was that the aliens had been deliberately demonstrating their powers and the reality of their presence here to a person of international standing and influence. So, according to Hopkins and the legend, powerful men *do* now know of the alien presence. In the light of non-events since, we may, if we choose, infer that the Great UFO Cover Up either kick-started on 30 November 1989 or was all the more assiduously pursued thereafter.

Now to expand on the links between the two stories.

Magic technology

There are a couple of alien talents repeatedly featured in *Nighteyes* that crop up in the Linda legend. One is the aliens' ability to translate themselves and their human victims through solid walls. Another is their ability to make themselves and their craft invisible. It would be difficult to make a conclusive connexion between the novel and the Linda legend in these instances, but the facts are highly suggestive.

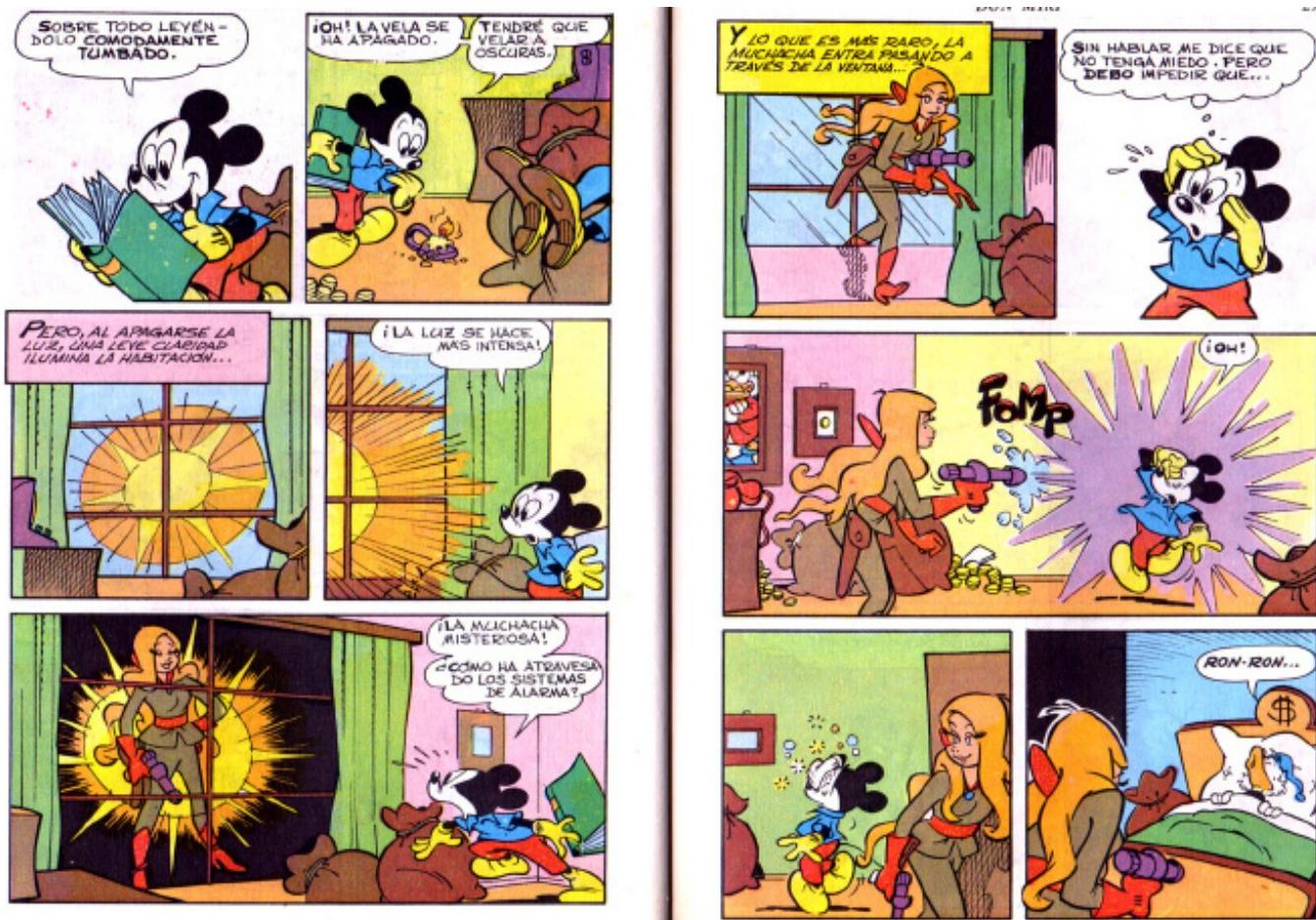
As Martin Kottmeyer notes:⁶

In alien abduction history the first person to experience travelling through a wall was Sandra Larson during a dream or strange awakening dated December 2, 1975. Two space mummies stood beside her, 'magnetized' her and then floated her through the wall to a glowing ufo several blocks away. Betty Andreasson, perhaps more importantly, drew entities going through a wall in *The Andreasson Affair*, giving the phenomenon a visual model to work off of. ...[C]ontactees had entities going through walls earlier than abductees. George King of the Aetherius Society had a Venusian versed in Yogic disciplines going through a locked door as early as 1954.... Carlos Allende's Philadelphia Experiment claims had people going through walls in his letter to Morris Jessup, received January 13, 1956. There are numerous examples of such in SF comics and pulps all the way back to November 1934.

So, this isn't a motif whose originality we can lay at the feet of any of the parties involved here. Reeves-Stevens, clearly a thorough researcher, very likely borrowed the idea from Larson and/or Andreasson. Reeves-Stevens is—for atmospheric reasons—sometimes a bit oblique about the abductees being transported through walls, but the implication is there in the mysterious undetected return of FBI Agent Reese into a locked closet, and when Wendy is taken from her father's apartment, no doors or windows are described as being left open. This lift is actually a diversion, designed to allow the aliens to nab Wendy's mother Sarah. No one sees her taken from the apartment and into the craft—her disappearance is discovered only once Wendy is found on the rooftop—so one is left to presume that the aliens whisked Sarah (and seemingly invisibly too) through windows and/or walls to get her away. Much later in the tale, the brutal bad-guy agent Luck is abducted but returned to Earth, vanishing through the floor of the spacecraft as he is sent on his way, somewhat discombobulated.

It's not impossible that Linda adapted all this for her own purposes, if (as does seem altogether plausible) *Nighteyes* was part of her inspiration. Napoli-tano claimed in her initial letter to Hopkins that she had not read any UFO books, but innocently or otherwise she may not have included science fiction in that category; and besides it is more likely that she would have read *Nighteyes* (published in April 1989, we recall) some time after that, along with many other UFO books, perhaps. It is worth noting that she was a voracious reader "of mass market books and [lived] a couple of blocks from a bookstore where





she often shopped".⁷ It had occurred to me that Hopkins might have read the book and, by leading his witness, inserted aspects of it into the account, but his former wife Carol Rainey had this⁸ to say in his defence:

I can't know for certain about Budd's reading *Nighteyes*. It was before my time. But I do not think it's likely at all that he's the one who read the book and offered Linda plot suggestions. As an artist and a writer, he would not want to be thought (even by himself) of being lacking in originality.

The motif of invisibility had been mooted in the ufological literature before, but rarely. Martin Kottmeyer tells me⁹ that in ufology invisibility is a tricky issue historically, and "I don't think it has been determined by anyone when it first arose in UFO abduction literature as far as the craft is concerned." He adds: "Selective visibility of an individual can be found in the José Antônio da Silva abduction of May 4-9, 1969. Keyhoe has a chapter 'The Invisible Saucers' in *The Flying Saucer Conspiracy* (1955) where claims of UFOs that are detected by radar, but 'They are invisible to the human eye' (p. 218) are discussed, but not in an abduction context." Luis Gonzalez has compiled a massive file of accounts of alien invisibility from folklore, fiction and ufology that shows that the motif goes back to at least 1892 in science fiction. Aliens use "invisible aerial cars" to travel about in Robert Potter's *The Germ Growers* which, we observe, was published before H.G. Wells's *The Invisible Man* (1897). Given the persistent (if devious) re-emergence of ideas first found in folklore and science fiction in abduction and saucer lore, it is perhaps not altogether surprising to see this one crop up in the Linda legend, but we should note that *in the context of an abduction*—which is how it appears in *Nighteyes*—it is rare to non-existent. What is surprising is the way Hopkins naïvely accepted it at face value in the Washburn case and used that to justify the detail in the Linda legend.

It is no secret that Hopkins was puzzled that Linda's abductors and their craft were seen on departure, but not seen to arrive. Then, after a presentation in Brisbane, Australia, in late 1992, he stumbled on the Washburns, and the amazing evidence that backed them up—photographs of an invisible UFO and, more astounding yet, of witnesses who had become invisible. The pictures showed a beach bereft of people, as befits photos of beaches with invisible people on them. The Washburns' story emerged (inevitably) through hypnosis. While Sam Washburn thought he was snapping his wife Jenny and their sons, "Jenny (and two sons) were being 'beamed-up' to a hovering UFO in much the same way as she had heard Hopkins describe Linda's (alleged) abduction. When Hopkins asked where Sam was, Jenny replied: 'He's down there where he was ... holding the camera. No one seems to see the big thing up over us'."¹⁰ Sam, in keeping with tradition, was apparently 'switched off' during the abduction, but in a new twist was also disappeared from others' view, presumably to save him embarrassment.

Hopkins concluded¹¹ that "Jenny's photos, then, provide clear, though indirect, physical evidence of the phenomenon of invisibility.

They buttress the near impossibility of a visible Sam not attracting attention while remaining absolutely frozen, camera to face, for perhaps an hour in a busy playground." In short, as Hopkins so lucidly put it, "a temporarily invisible camera recorded the invisibility of the Washburns against a visible landscape—the images caught in tones of red on temporarily invisible Kodak film!" [Sic throughout.]

Hopkins's boggle-meter-busting encounter with the Washburns was serendipitous, but that and Linda's case seem to have fed into each other, the one confirming the other in his mind. It is a measure of Hopkins's distance from common sense and his confinement in what James Moseley RIP called 'saucer logic' that he thought the Washburn photos to be evidence of anything at all (bar that beaches may sometimes be empty of people). As we've seen, invisibility wasn't a common trope in either ufology or abductology. But it is a repeating motif in *Nighteyes*, where the giant *pa* (mother-ship) and its fleet of subsidiary craft can make themselves invisible, as can crew members.¹²

As remarked, the *Nighteyes* 'aliens' are mutated human time travellers from the future. The notion that aliens are humans from the future was (as far as I know) first floated by Prof Michael Swords in 1985,¹³ but is not an overt feature of the Linda legend. Perhaps someone realized that too much weirdness can over-egg the cake. And besides, the motif didn't fit with the Hopkins/Jacobs paranoid vision of *otherworldly* (in all senses of the term) creatures threatening the purity of human bloodlines. So it makes diplomatic sense that it's not rehearsed or otherwise transmuted in the Linda legend—unless any mention of it was simply ignored by Hopkins when writing *Witnessed*.

Sean Meers, Budd Hopkins, and Linda Napolitano have all vehemently denied any connexion between the novel and Linda's story. The book's author (who ought to know) doesn't help their case, however. In a 1996 interview¹⁴ Reeves-Stevens said: "I thought of a scenario that would make sense of everything that has been written about alien abductions. I made sense of all the contradictions, all the different flying saucers we see, all the things the aliens said they were doing." And he added, "I thought, 'It'll be interesting if I see things I made up for the first time in my book show up in other people's abduction experiences.' Sure enough Budd Hopkins was investigating a very notorious alien abduction called 'The Manhattan Transfer'... [and] he published it and people asked 'Excuse me, isn't this *Nighteyes* by Garfield Reeves-Stevens?' I looked at it and could see some similarities, but the really exciting part was watching the Roswell alien autopsy in which they peeled the membranes off the creature's eyes. The first time that showed up anywhere was in *Nighteyes*!" Not quite damning, but certainly suggestive, testimony, *à propos* Linda's legend, and definitely a kick in a tender place for fans of the Santilli alien autopsy movie.

Some literary criticism

A final point about *Nighteyes* and the Linda legend. As Luis Gonzalez has written, "We, skeptics, are in a no-win position. If we point to similar details, believers argue that we should not pick details but see broader. When we see broader and discuss main themes, believers ask for a perfect reproduction of details."

A propos that analysis, skeptics can certainly agree with their detractors that there is not a point-for-point reproduction of the *Nighteyes* story in the Hopkins/Napolitano account. But nor would any informed skeptic expect there to be. Assuming that Napolitano had read the book, its themes and details would emerge under hypnosis as appropriate, bit by bit, depending on the context in the sessions, and altered or adapted from reconstructive, unreliable memory, and quite possibly unconsciously.¹⁵ The inversion of the motif of incompetent, ignorant government agencies of *Nighteyes* is effected in the legend for greater dramatic and mythic satisfaction and consistency—in UFO mythology the government knows *everything*—and might be expected in a collusion (again, not necessarily deliberate) of credulous hypnotist and willing subject. As might be expected too is the promotion of the protagonist in the Linda legend to the messianic 'Lady of the Sands', an environmentalist prophet, in keeping with fashion and narcissism, and in contrast to the relatively self-effacing Wendy of the novel, whose crucial role in human survival is revealed to her (and us) only very late in the novel.

The process, in other words, closely resembles the evolution of a piece of folklore, the mutating tale reconstructed from scenes in memory, or—perhaps more closely analogous, for Linda may have forgotten reading *Nighteyes*—a composer's unwitting appropriation of a motif or phrase from some now-forgotten piece of music. And clearly it would not be in any hoaxter's interest to mimic the *Nighteyes* plot too closely.

NOTES, REFERENCES & ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

1. Budd Hopkins, *Witnessed: the True Story of the Brooklyn Bridge UFO Abductions*, Simon & Schuster, 1996
2. Garfield Reeves-Stevens, *Nighteyes*, Doubleday, 1989

3. The text of *A Critique...* is available at <http://www.tricksterbook.com/ArticlesOnline/LindaCase.htm>
4. www.lindacortilecase.com/the-facts-regarding-the-alleged-sixteen-similarities-between-the-linda-cortile-case-and-the-science-fiction-novel-nighteyes.html. (Updated 13 Sep 2013)
5. To be fair, Carol Rainey (personal communication, 27 Feb 2014) qualifies my cynicism: "To my knowledge, Budd only received one typewritten letter that was addressed to him and was purportedly from 'The Third Man.' ... The possible person called 'Richard,' however, did forward another letter to Budd that seemed to be written by de Cuellar. It was a highly informal buddy letter, beginning 'Dear Richie,' and it was signed with 'the Third Man's' actual signature (or stamp). Those are the only two I know of, except the diplomat's denial letter to *Nova*." As an aside on Linda's perfervid environmentalism, it would be interesting to know if she had shown any interest in the matter before her 'abduction', and if she became in any sense active in any green cause afterwards. *Nighteyes* has the future-human aliens gathering up animals (specifically kittens) to take to safety before the coming apocalypse. When Wendy asks about this, an alien says portentously: "Many things have been lost. Now many things will be found."
6. Kottmeyer, personal communication, 27 Feb 2014
7. Rainey, *loc. cit.*
8. Rainey, *loc. cit.*
9. Kottmeyer, *loc. cit.*
10. Philip J Klass, "Photos Show ETs Can Make People, Things And Themselves Invisible, According To Budd Hopkins", *Skeptics' UFO Newsletter* No 23, p5
11. Quoted by Klass, *loc. cit.*, from "Hopkins' lecture at the 1993 MUFON UFO conference in Richmond, Va."
12. The matter is wonderfully complicated by late-comer 'witness' Yancy Spence, who claims (*UFO Magazine*, Oct/Nov 2002) that he saw the UFO approach Linda's building, shooting down a beam of light that changed from red to white to the blue beam (cf. Ed Walters and the Gulf Breeze case) up which Linda and her abductors were floated. Spence also managed to spot the immobilized limousines of the Third Man's motorcade, previously unnoticed (because made invisible?) by anyone else; he does not explain why their chauffeurs, who got out to stretch their legs in the street and generally behaved in an thoroughly unswitched-off fashion, neither saw nor reported anything unusual later. Spence has laid a \$500,000 wager that skeptics cannot prove he's lying. Well, no (shock! horror!), they can't—any more than Spence himself can prove that *he* is telling anything approaching the truth.
13. Michael D. Swords. "Ufonauts: Homo Sapiens of the Future?", *MUFON UFO Journal* No 202 (Feb 1985), pp7-13. Martin Kottmeyer, to whom (along with Luis Gonzalez) I owe this startling information—for one might have expected better from a science professor—did however add this caveat: "If you have [George Andrews' *Extra-Terrestrial Friends and Foes*]—read chapter 7 'Tentative Taxonomy of Extra-Terrestrial Humanoids' which involves revelations transmitted by Khyla of Procyon and whose 'home planet translates into English as "the home of those who travel through time.'" Khyla is a Blond, not a gray, but does make statements about the genetic experimentation on humans by Rigellian grays and similar stuff. ...Andrews was circulating this stuff years earlier and some of it found its way into the 1988 Krill Report." (Personal communications, 27 & 28 Feb 2014)
14. Pat Jankiewicz, "Night Eyes: Garfield Reese-Stevens offers the last word on alien encounters", *Starlog* No 232 (November 1996), pp32-3. Thanks to Martin Kottmeyer for drawing my attention to the article.
15. Cf. Melvyn Harris, "Past Lives: an Open Book?", *The Unexplained* No 135, Orbis 1983, pp2698–2700. Harris re-examines several accounts of 'past lives' retrieved under hypnosis and shows how they were reconstructed from historical novels that the subjects had read and consciously forgotten, but retained cryptomnesically.

I should like to thank, most heartily, Luis Gonzalez, Martin Kottmeyer and Carol Rainey for their extremely generous help in constructing this article.

This case was brought to my attention by Herb Taylor. According to NICAP:

June 24, 1950--California desert. Cigar-shaped UFO paced United Airlines plane for 20 minutes. [V] Navy pilot reported cigar-shaped UFO. [IV]¹

Section V is a listing of pilot sightings. There are two sightings from that date. One is from a Military pilot and the other is from an airliner.

AL 6-24-50 California desert F/O David Stewart, United Airlines Cigar-shaped object paced plane for 20 miles. [11]

M 6-24-50 nr Daggett, Calif. Navy transport pilot Cigar-shaped object above desert. [Section IV]²

The source for the airliner is from an AP article for June 27, 1950. The source for the military sighting refers to section IV, which states:

June 24 1950. The crews of two commercial airliners and a Navy transport sighted a cigar-shaped object about 100 miles northeast of Los Angeles, Calif. The pilot of the Navy plane (name confidential) spent 22 years in Naval aviation and now is a project administrator with a West Coast electronics firm. He was alerted by a United Airlines pilot who had seen the object and they both discussed the matter with CAA (now FAA) ground stations at Daggett and Silver Lake, Calif. The co-pilot of the Navy plane was the first to see it, and pointed it out to the pilot and navigator.

The pilot described the object as cigar-shaped, dark gray or gunmetal in color and giving off a faint shimmering heat radiation appearance at the tail end. He judged its apparent size as about 1/8th that of the full moon. Estimated altitude 50,000- 100,000 feet, speed 1000-1500 mph. for the three minutes it was in view. At first it was traveling north, but then turned west presenting a tail end view as it sped out of sight.

Signed report on file at NICAP, (Case certified by Paul Cerny, Chairman, Bay Area NICAP Subcommittee).³

I could find no Blue Book record of this event, so I decided the best way to see what was stated at the time was to read the actual news accounts from the time period.

The media's account

A search of the newspaper archive reveals a bit more information. What is not reported in "The UFO Evidence" is that the sighting was not restricted to one area but also visible in Nevada and Arizona, over 300 miles away!

Airlines Reveals New Disc Story

LOS ANGELES, June 27. (AP) United Airlines today disclosed the latest flying saucer report:

First Officer David Stewart of Redondo Beach, Calif., today told a news conference that his crew of five and 25 passengers watched a brilliantly glowing object speed through the desert sky Saturday night.

Stewart said the object was more cigar-shaped than the previously reported pancake-shaped "saucers."

He said his ship was flying at 14,000 feet and that the object flew a parallel course for 20 miles and then faded into the distance. He estimated its speed as faster than his plane's 290 miles per hour.

Huge Saucer Seen Over Southern Cal

LOS ANGELES (INS) — A United Airlines flight officer reported Tuesday that the crew and 50 passengers of a westbound plane saw a huge orange and blue "flying saucer" above southern California last Saturday.

The officer, David Stewart of Redondo Beach, said that he saw the mysteriously lighted object shortly after sundown while on a flight from Denver to Los Angeles.

Stewart said that the "saucer" was in plain view for about 10 minutes, but gradually faded away when his plane lost altitude in its descent.

When Stewart first glimpsed the mysterious sky object it was in the shape of the numeral 3. He said that a minute or two later, the object began moving "with a tremendous speed" and changed its shape into what appeared to be a dirigible.

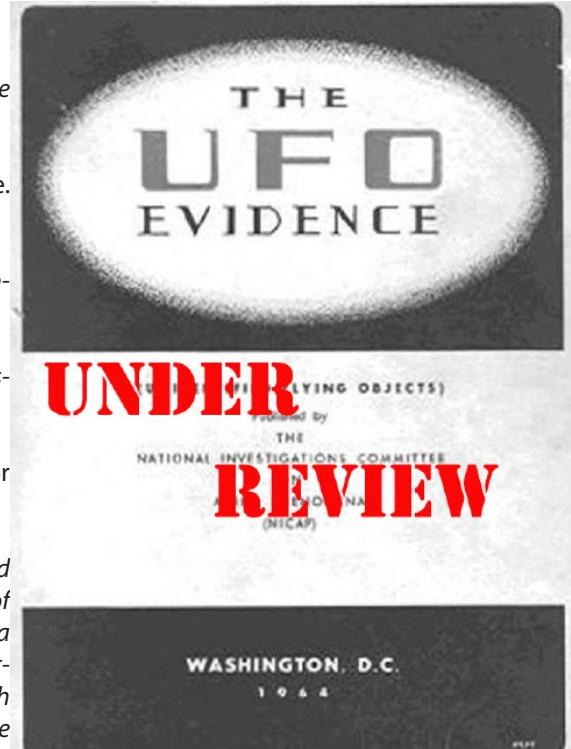
Pilots Report Strange Blazing Flying Object

LOS ANGELES, (UPI) — Two airline pilots insist that they saw a brilliant, blue and orange object shaped like a dirigible moving over Southern Idaho.

Capt. Sam B. Wiper and First Officer David Stewart said that the phenomenon couldn't have been an optical illusion. They said it also was sighted by their planeload of passengers, by observers at Las Vegas, Nev., and Silver Lake, and by Air Force and Navy pilots on Monday night.

The blazing object, which neither would identify as a flying saucer, was about 60,000 feet high and 30 miles from them they said. Stewart said long trails of light streamed from it

The three news services gave differing descriptions of the events from the United Airline crew. The UP report seems to be full of errors as they state the event occurred over Idaho and happened on the 26th (Monday night). Either the crewmen were not clear in their descriptions, gave different accounts of what they saw, or the media got their facts wrong. About the only thing consistent in the articles was the object was bright, moved very fast, and faded into the distance. This table summarizes the three different versions reported in the newspapers.



FIERY OBJECT REPORTS ARE STILL COMING

Something Went Over Nevada Saturday Night

More and more proof keeps coming in to back up the report that there was something strange over this part of Nevada late Saturday night.

It appears now that it was far different from the ordinary report of flying saucers. It was seen by a group of fliers at Lovelock, as reported in the Sunday Nevada State Journal. It also was seen by several people in Reno, who reported the fact too late to make the Sunday edition.

Yesterday United Press carried another account of the phenomenon dated from Los Angeles and quoting two veteran airline pilots as saying the object was a blazing, dirigible-like phenomenon trailing streams of light in the skies over Nevada.

Neither First Officer David Stewart, who's been flying for 18 years, nor Capt. Sam B. Wiper identified the object as a flying saucer, which the Air Force insists does not exist.

"I've never seen anything in the skies that remotely resembled what I saw Saturday night," Stewart said.

The United Airliner was at an altitude of 14,000 feet when Stewart saw the object, much higher in the sky. He said it also was seen by other crew members and the 50 passengers, stations at Las Vegas and Silver Lake, Calif., to whom the plane radioed for confirmation, and an Army plane and Navy plane in the vicinity.

"We know all about jets and vapor trails and optical illusions," Wiper said. "This thing was there."

A Reno family, who did not want to be quoted by name, said they were traveling along the highway near Fernley when they sighted the object about 10 p.m. They discounted the guess that it was a meteor when the trail of light it left formed a figure "3." They said the trail was luminous and faded into an orange color before disappearing.

News service	Duration	Speed	Altitude	Comments
AP ⁴	4-5 minutes?	>290mph	14,000 feet	Fade into distance
INS ⁵	10 minutes	tremendous speed	None given	Changes shape from #3 into a dirigible. It then faded into distance
UP ⁶	None given	None given	60,000 feet	Shape of dirigible with long trails of light streaming from it. 30 miles away.

Because the media reports could not agree on some of the details we have to assume that they probably got some of the details wrong concerning the event. The AP was the only report that stated the object paced the aircraft for 20 miles. However, the UP stated they reported the object 30 miles distant. Perhaps the 20 mile value was the distance the object was estimated to be away. First officer Stewart was quoted as stating the object was moving faster than his airplane's 290 mph and that it moved at tremendous speed. If it was much faster than his airplane, it probably was not "pacing" his aircraft for several minutes.

It wasn't just the United Airlines report that was confusing. There were reports over Nevada, California, and Arizona. All gave slightly different descriptions of the event. David Rudiak has quite a listing of this event with selections from various news papers.⁷

I found many reports in the newspaper archives. The Nevada State Journal reported that witnesses saw the event from Reno, Lovelock, and Fernley. If they saw the same event as the UAL flight, it indicates that the UFO was at a very high altitude to be seen at the same time or its track took it across all of these locations. The story that appeared in the Nevada State Journal on the 25th came from fliers in the Lovelock area.⁸ They reported the object moving from south to north, flying at high altitude, moving at a tremendous rate of speed, and leaving a vapor trail that lasted for 20 minutes. It is interesting to note that one of those reports from Nevada mentioned that the "smoke trail" had the shape of a number "3".⁹

The smoke trail caught quite a few people's attention across the region. Ely, Nevada residents and Nevada State Journal, Shell announced yesterday.

The tool board was especially built for Shell by the makers of the well-known Stanley tools. A similar award is being offered by

The tool board measures four feet long and three feet wide, is equipped with clamps to hold each

Lovelock.

The Lovelock editor said that the fliers reported the missile streaked through the air at a "terrific rate of speed" and was apparently flying at a very high altitude.

Lovelock Fliers See Mystery Object; Maybe It's a Saucer!

Residents of the Lovelock area last night said they saw something that they claim might have been a flying saucer—with flames.

They reported sighting a mysterious object that came out of the southern sky at 9:00 p.m., dipped momentarily toward the community, and then zoomed north, shooting out bright red flames and leaving a vapor trail that could be seen for more than 20 minutes.

According to Paul Gardiner, editor of the Lovelock Review-Miner, the first word of the phenomenon was received from a group of experienced pilots at the Lovelock flying field.

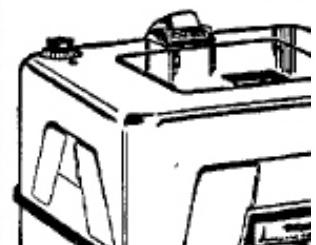
He said that the entire crew of more than 30 fliers witnessed the

event, saying that the flying object had no visible or describable shape, possibly because of the partly cloudy skies at the time and more so because of the intense brightness of the exhaust flames.

The pilots' report was confirmed by attendants at the Civil Aeronautics tower at Derby Field 11 miles from Lovelock, who said that the vapor trail was definitely made by a mechanical, flying object.

The pilots, none of whom cared to be identified, according to Mr. Gardiner, were getting ready to fly to Oregon where they are to dust and spray fields from the air to eradicate the spreading spruce bud worm in the southwestern part of the state. They are all employees of the Roberts Aircraft Corp. at

SUPER SPECIAL
FOR A LIMITED
WITH THE PURCHASE
HOTPOINT AUTO
You May Purchase
\$79 Hotpoint Auto
For only
ONLY 10 MACHINES FIRST SIX MONTHS



saw it change shape from the number "3" to a "disc" before disappearing.¹⁰ Pilots in Arizona even saw the trail to the north. Their report, found in the Reno Evening Gazette, mentions the "vapor trail" but never mentions the pilots seeing the UFO that produced it.¹¹ However, David Rudiak's LA times story of the same event, has the pilots stating they saw a very bright object that left this trail.¹²

The amount of news reports that mention the bright object are not quite as numerous as those who mention the trail in the sky, which lasted much longer. Observers in Modesto, California reported seeing a ball of "orange fire" that was very fast and flew from north to south.¹³ David Rudiak's selection from the Fallon Standard by R.A. Pederson contains some clues.¹⁴ Mr. Pederson describes his wife being out around 9PM and seeing a bright light in the northeast sky that quickly disappeared. However, he was able to observe the smoke trail that was left behind. Rudiak also has a news story on his web site about two Silver Lake airport aircraft communicators, who stated they saw a "ball of fire" with a "luminous vapor trail" in the northern sky.¹⁵ Even though they thought it might have been a meteor, they also mentioned they saw it for 7-10 minutes and it moved to the west before disappearing. There are several instances, where witnesses suggested they thought it was an airplane crash.

There is an interpretation one might draw from all of these conflicting news reports. Many reports mention the "ball of fire" moving at high speed. If it was moving at high speed, it could not have been visible for many minutes. By most accounts, It was the "vapor trail" that was visible for many minutes and this may have affected how long the event was reported in the media. If this interpretation is accurate, then the UFO could have been a bright meteor. After the meteor faded out, the bright vapor trail it left behind took on the shape of the number "3" as high altitude winds twisted its shape. While the description of the ion train being in the shape of a number "3" seems odd, it really isn't. Ion trains vary depending on the upper level winds and can take on unusual shapes including the number "3". One of my first bright fireball observations, from 1974, involved a train that lasted about three minutes and had separated into two sections. One of these sections assumed the shape of an "S".

The trajectory of the object is somewhat unclear. It is implied that the United Airlines flight saw the object move westward. The observers in Lovelock stated the object moved from south to north. The NICAP document indicates a northerly course followed by a course correction to the west. The Modesto observers mention the object moving in the opposite direction going from north to south. If one examines enough fireball reports, it is not unusual to see directions reversed. Harold Povenmire mentioned this in his book about fireballs and meteors:

Ely Residents See Sky Smoke

ELY, June 28.—Hundreds of residents in this section of Nevada observed a phenomena in the sky early Saturday night which has been variously described as a vapor trail, smoke from a falling airplane or perhaps the trail of a "flying saucer."

The huge spiral of "smoke" was observed by residents throughout this district, and also in Pioche and other areas. From the Ely district it was seen almost due west, and local residents surmised that it was probably as far distant as south of Austin.

Al Bryer, engineer, observed the vapor, or smoke, from the Briston Silver mine near Pioche, and said here today that from the angle it appeared as a huge figure 3 in the sky.

It was first seen about 8:45 p.m. Saturday, and had dissipated in about a half hour. In Ely it was reported that the shape of the phenomena changed from a spiral shape to that of a disc before disappearing.

As far as is known here no planes have been reported missing.

Flying Ball Of Orange Fire Spotted

MODESTO, June 26 (UPI)—Six persons called a radio station Saturday night to report seeing a "burst of orange fire" in the skies over Modesto, and two others said they saw the same thing Friday night.

Four of the persons called before radio station KTVR broadcast an account of the phenomenon. Two others called in after the broadcast to report they also had seen it. Two other calls came from persons who claimed they saw it the night before.

The radio station said all described the flame as shaped like a ball and orange in color. It was traveling from North to South at a great rate of speed.

Eugene Utter of Sacramento, the only one of the eight willing to give his name, said he saw the flame while driving from Sacramento to Los Angeles on US Highway 99, near Modesto.

Three Air Force soldiers at Hamilton Field last week claimed they saw a flame streak through the skies near San Rafael.

Airline Men See Mystery Flame in Sky

By UNITED PRESS

Three American Airlines transport pilots reported by radio Saturday night seeing a long, glowing vapor trail in the skies over Nevada.

The airline said two of the passenger planes were flying between 18,000 and 20,000 feet over Arizona and the third at the same altitude near Bryce Canyon, Colo., when their pilots spotted the phenomenon.

The pilots, Capts. J. O. Tipton, Paul Vance and Gene Krus said the vapor trail appeared to be very high and agreed that it was over south-central Nevada.

All three radiced Los Angeles International Airport to report the mysterious trail about 9:13 p.m. (PDT). Tipton and Vance were enroute to San Francisco from Dallas, Tex. Krus was flying from Chicago to Los Angeles.

NEVADANS ALSO SEE AIR OBJECT

Reports by American Airlines pilots coincide with those sent here from the Lovelock area Saturday night by persons who said they saw a mysterious object come out of the southern sky, dip toward the community, and then zoom north, shooting out "bright red flames" and leaving a vapor trail.

They said the object was sighted over Lovelock at about 9 p.m.

It is surprising how many people do not know North from South, or even know which way the house that they live in faces.... Another common problem involves what I call 'path reversal'. Many times I will receive a good clear report, but when I begin to work with the given numbers, I can tell that something is very wrong. It will have the object criss-crossing the correct path, or in the correct path but going the wrong way.....¹⁶

Of course there is the signed report in NICAP files being presented as evidence, which might rule out the meteor explanation. Unfortunately, we have no date for this letter and, since NICAP did not come into existence until 1956, it probably was not written until many years later. The significant passage of time between the actual event and when it was recorded is going to affect its accuracy. For instance, the description that the object shifted its direction of travel from north to the west is not part of any of the accounts written in 1950. The same can be said for the "gun metal" or "dark grey" color. The 1950 accounts describe something that was bright and emitting streams of light. The dark shape described by the witness years later may also have been a false/confused memory or he might have been influenced by the "airship effect" as noted in the Zond IV incident. This report in the NICAP files may or may not be an accurate representation of what actually was seen. Therefore, it can not be used as the final word on the case.

Is it solved?

Without more information, it is hard to conclusively resolve this case. "The UFO evidence" has presented a highly selective evaluation of the case by using only a few stories that support their desired conclusion. While "The UFO evidence" draws the conclusion that this is proof of alien visitation, I am not that convinced. It could have been a bright fireball. Without accurate observations of the event, the best one can do is label the case "insufficient information".

Notes and References

1. Hall, Richard M. (Ed.) The UFO evidence. The National Committee on Aerial Phenomena (NICAP). New York: Barnes and Noble. 1997. P. 131.
2. ibid. P. 34.
3. ibid. P. 31.
4. "Airlines reveals new disc story". Long Beach (Calif.) Press-Telegram. Long Beach, California. June 27, 1950. P. B-7.
5. "Huge saucer seen over southern Cal". Pacific Stars and Stripes. June 29, 1950. P. 2.
6. "Pilots report strange blazing flying object". Oxnard press courier. Oxnard, California. June 29, 1950. P. 18.
7. Rudiak, David. June 24, 1950 Cal/Nev UFO Newspaper Accounts. December 10, 2011. Available WWW:http://www.roswellproof.com/UFO_CalNev_1950_newspapers.html
8. "Lovecock fliers see mystery object; Maybe it's a saucer!" Nevada state journal. Reno, Nevada. June 25, 1950. P. 20
9. "Fiery object reports are still coming". Nevada state journal. Reno, Nevada. June 25, 1950. P. 8.
10. "Ely residents see sky smoke". Reno evening gazette. Reno, Nevada. June 28, 1950. P. 11.
11. "Airline men see mystery flame in sky". Berkeley Daily Gazette. Berkeley, California. June 26, 1950. P. 10.
12. Rudiak, David. June 24, 1950 Cal/Nev UFO Newspaper Accounts. December 10, 2011. Available WWW:http://www.roswellproof.com/UFO_CalNev_1950_newspapers.html
13. "Flying ball of orange fire spotted".
14. Rudiak, David. June 24, 1950 Cal/Nev UFO Newspaper Accounts. December 10, 2011. Available WWW:http://www.roswellproof.com/UFO_CalNev_1950_newspapers.html
15. ibid.
16. Povenmire, Harold. Fireballs, meteors, and meteorites. JSB enterprises. Indian Harbour Beach, Florida. 1980. P. 60

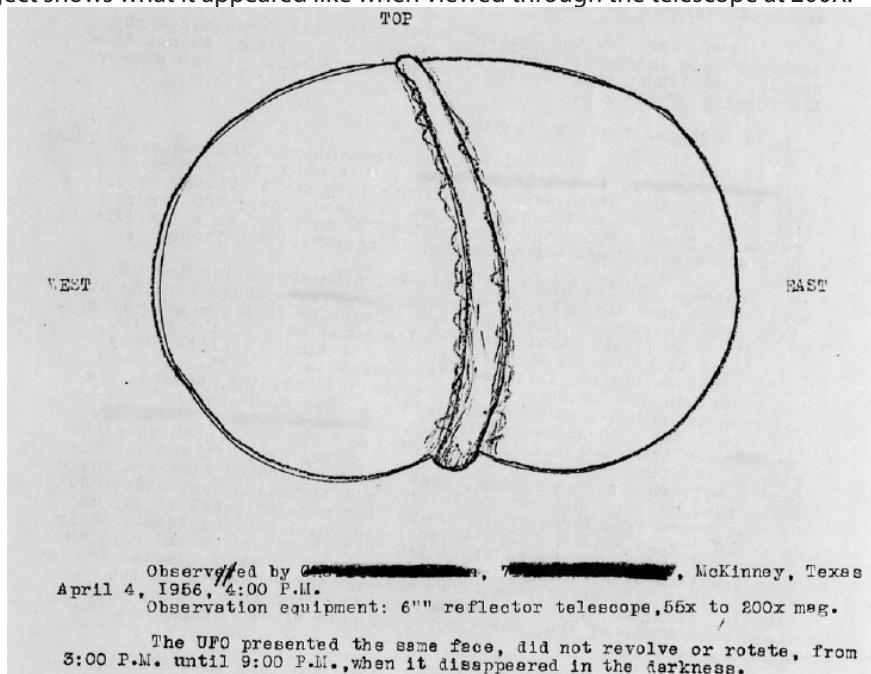
The 701 club - Case 4050: April 4, 1956

Don Berliner describes this case as follows:

April 4, 1956; McKinney, Texas. 3:15 p.m. Witnesses: Capt. Roy Hall, U.S. Army, ret.; Charles Anderson and others; some observed through a 6" telescope, others through a 55-200x telescope. One fat, oblong object with two lines around its middle, remained stationary for 6 hours.¹

The Blue Book file contains a three page letter from witness Roy Hall, which includes a sketch, as seen by the observer, through a six-inch reflecting telescope. Details about the sighting reveal that:²

1. The object was visible seven degrees north of Venus for the entire 6 hours (3-9PM CST).
2. The object moved slowly westward.
3. The object disappeared after sunset.
4. The object was one minute of arc across. Witness Roy Hall computed that this made the object roughly 200 feet across and about 100,000 feet in altitude.
5. Witness Roy Hall contacted observers as far west as 100 miles and 50 miles north, who all saw the object. They stated that it appeared overhead to them.
6. When viewed through the telescope, it appeared to be made of "translucent rubber".
7. According to Hall, the upper level winds were moving towards the east.
8. The sketch of the object shows what it appeared like when viewed through the telescope at 200X.³



9. The record card states, "Obj similar to balloon".⁴

Blue Book suggested that it was possibly some form of Parhelion due to cirrus clouds in the area at the time but left it as "unidentified".⁵ Looking at the sketch and reading the description, it appears that this UFO was a high altitude research balloon. Is it possible that this explanation is adequate?

Additional information

If the object was a balloon of some kind, the first thing one needs to know is what were the upper level winds doing on April 4, 1956. The upper level air soundings for various Texas locations on the fourth of April indicate they were coming from the southwest. This table shows the rough average wind azimuth/speed (kts) for 30000-50000 feet.⁶

Time (UTC)	Bryan	Fort Worth	Del Rio	El Paso
0900	247.5/68.5	253.3/107.3	252/65.8	Not available
1500	247/79.8	253.8/70	250.4/67.8	241/79.7
2100	242.8/96	244.2/84.3	240/70.3	Not available

While these are the winds in the troposphere, the winds in the stratosphere are also important. The general pattern for stratospheric

winds to be from the west in the winter and from the east in the summer. The transition months are April/May and September/October. The shift in April and May depends upon the altitude and latitude. The higher the altitude and further south one is, the more likely the stratospheric winds will be coming from the east.⁷ A balloon at 80,000 feet and at a latitude of 33 degrees north, could have had winds from the east or west on April 4, 1956.

A potential source

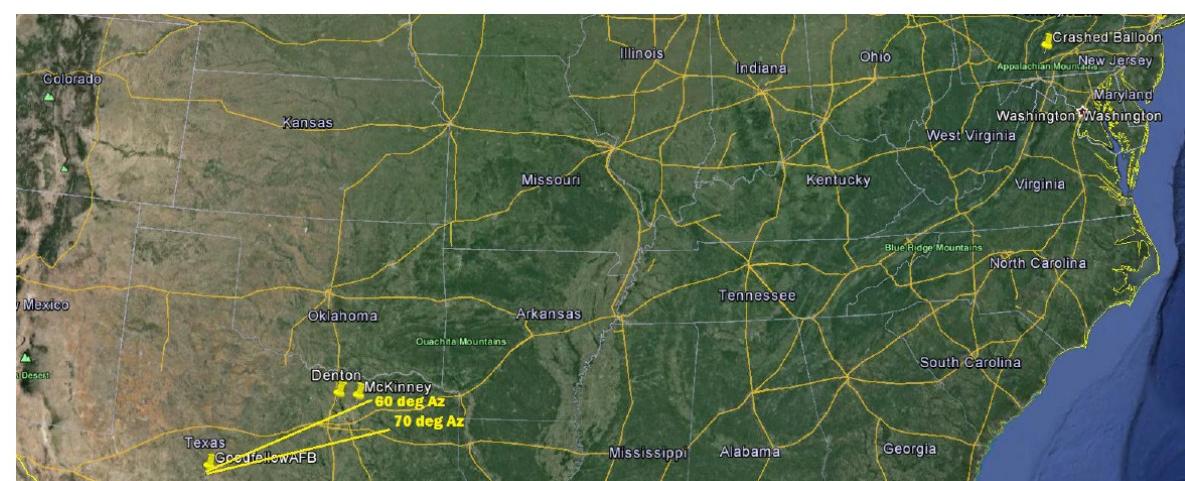
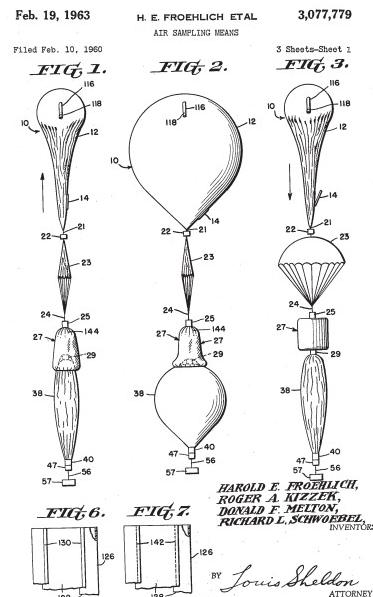
The stratocat database lists a balloon launch from Goodfellow AFB on April 4, 1956 as part of project Grab Bag.⁸ Grab Bag was an effort to gather radioactive isotopes in the stratosphere that were released from Soviet above ground nuclear explosions and nuclear weapons production facilities by using high altitude balloons. The project Grab Bag balloons were complex systems that used a main balloon to raise the collector into the stratosphere and return it back to earth. The configuration used can be seen in the figure to the right.⁹ The system was taken aloft by the lifting balloon (fig. 1). When in the stratosphere, a collection system would fill up a polyethylene envelope that was suspended underneath the main balloon. When nearly full, the system appeared as two balloons with one underneath the other (fig. 2). After collection, the system would descend back into the troposphere, where the air in the envelope was transferred to a metallic chamber. When close to the ground, the chamber was dropped via parachute to the ground and the lifting balloon would then vent off and end its flight (fig. 3). Helicopters or chase aircraft would direct/transport recovery crews to the landing site of the chamber for recovery.

Goodfellow AFB was located in San Angelo, Texas at an azimuth of roughly 240 degrees from McKinney and 250 miles away. The upper level tropospheric winds would have pushed the balloon in a northeast direction towards McKinney. Once the balloon reached the stratosphere, the balloon might have drifted westward with those winds.

A search of the newspaper archive reveals a report in the Denton, Texas newspaper (about 30 miles west of McKinney), which identifies the object as a weather balloon.¹⁰ They had called Carswell AFB in Fort Worth and the officer of the day, after checking, stated a C-47 and a fighter jet from Perrin AFB both identified it as such. It seems odd that a C-47 was reported as flying at 45,000 feet while the service ceiling for that plane was below 30,000 feet. This is probably a reference to the altitude of the jet fighter, which also identified the unknown.

The mention of a C-47 seeing the balloon is interesting because, according to an Air Force Times article written in 1961, the chase plane used in the balloon flights from Goodfellow AFB was a C-47.¹¹ Was the C-47 referenced in the news article, the possible plane used to pursue the balloon launched that day? While the C-47 was still in use in the USAF in 1956, it had been slowly replaced by better aircraft. It may not have been by chance that the C-47 was present. If so, they would have had no problem identifying the object as a balloon.

Examining the stratocat database, we see that there are no records of other balloons being launched from this time period until April 9th, when a balloon had been launched from Minnesota. This brings up another



Huge Balloon Causes Power Interruption

HUGE BALLOON

(Continued from First Page)
Flash lit up the sky when the balloon fouled the high tension lines.

Penceler repairmen were on the job in short order and the power trouble was soon repaired. Blackout in a large area of Huntington County last night interruption was only for a matter of a few seconds when a high tension wire atop Piney Ridge circuit breaker let go. It caused the blacked out areas include a "surge" in the line. The balloon was removed from Mapleton Mill Creek. The large Pennsylvania Glass Sand Co. plant last night, but it still remained lodged in nearby trees. Smithfield, Marblehead, McConnel's repairmen planned to roll town and surrounding areas to bring the deflated balloon to the ground. The service interruption around this morning was from 8:16 until 9:12 in all areas except Marlborough where service was not restored until 10 o'clock.

Phil Hoffman, Penceler foreman, said today that the balloon, sent up at Fleming Air Force Base, St. Paul, Minn., was one of the largest he had ever seen. He described it as "huge" in size. The balloon caught on the phone wires and Penceler's 4,160-volt primary line and the 45,000-volt transmission line at Lefardi's Bench, atop Piney Ridge. It was reported that a brilliant (Continued On Page Two)

curious situation I found in the newspaper archive. On April 6, 1956 a large research balloon, which was reported as being launched from St. Paul, Minnesota, caused a power interruption in Pennsylvania roughly halfway between Pittsburgh and Harrisburg.¹² The identification of the balloon as being from Minnesota may have had something to do with the reward tags that were probably with the balloon. The General Mills technicians were launching the balloons from Goodfellow and they probably used their own tags, which asked the person discovering the balloon to contact their headquarters in Minnesota. This indicates the balloon could have been the Grab Bag flight launched on the fourth. The straight line azimuth from Goodfellow AFB is about 58 degrees, which is the general direction the balloon would travel if it were below 50,000 feet. Upper level tropospheric winds for the states between Pennsylvania and Texas were from the west and west-southwest during the time period (rough average wind direction for 30,000-50,000 feet).¹³

Date/time (UTC)	Fort Smith, AK	Memphis, TN	Dayton, OH	Pittsburgh, PA
4/5 1500	230	250	263	270
4/6 1500	No data	269	140 (one data point). 0900 balloon - 262 2100 balloon - 255	257

It is also possible that the stratospheric winds could have shifted from east to west as the balloon descended into the lower stratosphere or moved northwards. Of course, this balloon might have come from elsewhere and was totally unrelated to the events of April 4th. Without more information we can't be sure if it was the same balloon.

Was it the Grab Bag flight?

Goodfellow had been launching these balloons for some time prior to 1956. On January 17, 1955, the Baytown Sun reported that an Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) balloon launched from Goodfellow AFB had landed on a Dublin, Texas farm.¹⁴ In another instance, a July 31, 1955 news clipping from Cedar Rapids mentioned that "Operation Skyhook" balloons were being launched from Goodfellow AFB.¹⁵ The mentioning of the AEC indicates they were interested in collecting atomic particles, which is consistent with Grab Bag and Ash Can (a related project) balloon flights..

In late January of 1956, there were several newspapers that carried a story that, once again, balloons were going to be launched from Goodfellow AFB.¹⁶ They mention that ten balloons would be launched by General Mills technicians between January and February and that they were supposed to come down on the same day they were launched. These are what one would expect from Grab Bag missions.

The witness' sketch indicates that this may have been a Grab Bag balloon. The directions given indicate that the west is towards the left, which is towards the horizon. That means the sketch should be rotated 90 degrees to reflect the proper orientation of the object with respect to the ground. In that arrangement, the drawing begins to resembles a Grab Bag configuration with the lifting balloon on the top and the collection envelope underneath it.

We don't have a launch time for the April 4th balloon but, based on what is stated about the project, the balloons were launched in the morning and usually took about three hours to reach an altitude of 80,000 feet.¹⁷ Assuming this was a standard Grab Bag flight, this implies that it was unlikely that the object seen was the balloon launched from Goodfellow. However, there are issues that might have resulted in the balloon being aloft that evening.

One possibility is that the balloon was not a full Grab Bag flight. According to Curtis Peebles, the initial test phase for the Grab Bag flights started in 1955 and the collection of actual samples did not occur until 1956.¹⁸ He adds those early collection flights were only launched from Brazil and the Panama canal zone. His information may not be complete and, based on the news paper ac-

Seen a flying saucer lately?

If you have — especially in the last couple of months — it could well have been a balloon.

Operation Skyhook has just ended at Goodfellow field in Texas. Scientists from the Atomic Energy Commission and physicists from the office of naval research have been making soundings of the upper air.

The balloons they have been using are big enough to start with, but they expand rapidly as they rise and by the time they have hit 100,000 feet they are 80 times larger or approximately the length of a football field.

The balloons generally are up about eight hours and then an electrically timed explosive is touched off to deflate the big bag. The instruments float to the ground on a parachute.

AT SAN ANGELO

Navy Sends Up Plastic Balloons

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26 (UPI)—The Navy, in the midst of a series of balloon launches across the Pacific, started Wednesday sending up bigger plastic bags in Texas—into the upper atmosphere.

United States teams recruited from Japan, which were recruited to travel to under 30,000 feet and to travel to the United States, the Texas balloons will be set to go up to 120,000 feet and to come down in Texas the same day.

The balloons being launched at Goodfellow Air Force Base, San Angelo, Tex., measure up to 90 feet in diameter. That's more than twice the size of those being carried by air currents across the Pacific.

Called "skyhook" balloons, they are actually launched by technicians of General Mills, Inc., of Minneapolis under contract to the Office of Naval Research.

The Navy said the entire series of experiments — in all nine scheduled — are coordinated by the Atomic Energy Commission.

Each balloon will carry up to 150 pounds of devices for studying cosmic rays, the high energy nuclear particles from outer space.

The series of launching is expected to be concluded about Feb. 12.

The Navy urged ranchers and cattlemen in Texas to watch for the balloons and for the equipment when they land in their area. Each balloon will contain a small tag.

Prizes will be awarded to representatives of General Mills, either at Goodfellow Base or in Minneapolis. Cash awards will be paid the finders.

Knowland Set To Risk Bid On Primaries

WASHINGTON, Jan. 26—Sen. George Knowland was reported ready today to risk his confidential bid for the Republican presidential nomination on his showing in five primaries.

They are the ones in Illinois,

Alabama, Florida, Maryland and his home state of California.

Knowland, Senate GOP leader,

Wayward Balloon Not Sighted Today

Where, oh where, has that wayward balloon gone? Nobody seems to know.

Monday night the experimental weather balloon released Saturday from San Angelo's Goodfellow Air Force Base—had been sighted over Breckenridge. Earlier it had hovered over the Abilene vicinity, causing reports of a "second sun" when it glowed brightly from reflected sun rays.

The balloon, about four stories tall and 128 feet in diameter, was supposed to deflate itself after a few hours and glide to earth with its 440 pounds of weather recording equipment, but it didn't.

Big Weather Balloon Observed In Area

Another of the large helium-filled stratosphere balloons, used in scientific research, floated over the Brownwood area Sunday afternoon and was viewed by many residents of this area from 5 p.m. until dark.

The balloon was south of Brownwood and appeared to be moving eastward, although a casual glance at the star-like bright spot left the impression that it was motionless.

A similar balloon passed over Brownwood recently and was being tracked by a big helicopter which landed near Early High School for a stop of more than two hours.

Such balloons have been released from Mathis Field at San Angelo in connection with research by the U. S. Navy, a number of universities of the world, and General Mills.

One of the balloons released at the San Angelo field measured 225 feet in length when stretched out to the ground and carried 100 pounds of scientific equipment. It was scheduled to reach an altitude of 120,000 feet.

"Its purpose was to measure cosmic rays in the stratosphere and their possible effect on interplanetary ships of the future, such as the satellite the U. S. will launch in the future."

The scientific instruments hang from a 100-foot cord attached to the balloon and are released by parachute by automatic devices at a pre-arranged hour, or by an earlier radio impulse that can be controlled by tracking crews.

counts, at least some of the flights from Texas appear to have been full Grab Bag configurations. However, the possibility exists that some of them may have been service flights used to test some of the features that would be employed in later configurations. In that case, the standard flight profile may have not been used and the balloon might not have been scheduled to return to earth that day.

It is also possible that the balloon had a malfunction, which resulted in it still being airborne on the evening of the fourth. These systems were complex and there was the potential for a failure that prevented the system from initiating the descent of the balloon. The February 12, 1957 Abilene Reporter-News stated that a balloon released from Goodfellow on February 9th (listed as a Grab Bag flight in the Stratocat database¹⁹) had been sighted over Breckenridge and Abilene on the evening of February 11th.²⁰ According to that report, the balloon's deflation device failed to operate and the balloon stayed aloft for several days.

There also may have been a delay in launching the balloon that morning. The launching of a flight was no easy task and the potential for delays due to equipment malfunction, weather, or air traffic concerns could have resulted in an afternoon launch. Writing about project Grab Bag, Dr. Bernard Gildenberg mentioned that recovery operations sometimes occurred at night.²¹ There were also instances where these balloons were seen in the evening. The Brownwood Bulletin reports a high altitude balloon being visible from Brownwood on the 22nd of April (just 18 days later) from 5PM until dark.²² There are no high altitude balloons listed in the Stratocat database (this database is incomplete) but the likely source was probably a balloon from Goodfellow AFB only about 80 miles to the WSW of Brownwood. The only balloons Goodfellow was launching appear to be for project Grab Bag. Like the April 4th balloon over Denton/McKinney, this balloon was airborne in the evening.

While there seems to be several reasons why the balloon could have been airborne that evening, there is another part of the observation that gives one reason to question the balloon explanation. In his letter, Captain Hall, stated that the balloon disappeared around 9PM when it got dark. The sun had set about 6:49PM CST. Nautical twilight ended around 7:44 PM CST and astronomical twilight ended at 8:14 PM CST. This indicates that the sky was essentially dark around 8 PM and the balloon, even though it was in the stratosphere, would have little to no illumination from the sun. It is possible that the witness was a bit off on their time estimate of when the object disappeared. He had written the letter a month after the event, which might have resulted in an inaccurate recall of the exact time they lost track of the balloon. It might have been when twilight was ending and he simply remembered that as being 9PM based on when it got dark when he actually wrote the letter (astronomical twilight ended around 8:44 PM CST on May 14th).

It is also possible that he was able to track the balloon because of the lighting found on the payload. Dr. Bernard Gildenberg states the payload on the Grab Bag flights had lighting²³ and Curtis Peebles states that other research balloons usually had anti-collision lighting on their payloads.²⁴ Assuming there was lighting, it might have allowed the witness to follow the balloon into darkness especially if they were using the six-inch telescope to track the object.

While there are concerns about relating this sighting to the launch of the Grab Bag flight from Goodfellow AFB, they are not strong enough to eliminate this particular balloon as the source for the McKinney sighting. It is important to recognize that pilots of two aircraft identified the UFO as a balloon and the sketch made by the witness through the telescope looks like a balloon of some kind. Without another source, the Grab Bag balloon appears to be the best potential candidate for this UFO report.

Why didn't Blue Book get this one?

The file consists of a single three-page letter from Captain Hall sent directly to USAF intelligence and nothing else. It does not appear that he ever contacted a local AF base to report the sighting so there was no effort to investigate it. Captain Hall also presented two other sightings of "UFOs" in his letter indicating he might not have been that critical of an observer (despite claiming he did not believe in "flying saucers").

The big question is why didn't Carswell report their UFO identification to Blue Book. Apparently, the officer of the day at Carswell, when contacted by the Denton newspaper, made a few inquiries and identified the object they sighted. Because it was identified, I suspect they saw no reason to contact Blue Book or fill out a sighting report. It would not be the first time that a decision of this kind was made by a local commander, who may not want to bother the upper chain of command with, what they felt, useless information. As a result, the potential key to the puzzle was missed and the object remain "unidentified".

Is it Solved?

While there are no details (track/launch time/equipment failure report) for the Goodfellow balloon flight of April 4, 1956 that will positively identify this as the source, there is information that suggests it could have been the balloon sighted at McKinney, Texas and elsewhere that evening. Even if the object was not the system launched from Goodfellow, the information from the files indicates it was, very probably, some sort of research balloon. This case should be classified as a probable research balloon.

Notes and references

1. Berliner, Don. "The Bluebook unknowns". NICAP. Available WWW: <http://www.nicap.org/bluebook/unknowns.htm>
2. "Letter from Roy Hall to Director Air Force Intelligence dated May 14, 1956 Pages 1-2". Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6785498/>, <http://www.fold3.com/image/6785499/>
3. "Letter from Roy Hall to Director Air Force Intelligence dated May 14, 1956 page 3". Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6785500/>
4. "Project 10073 record card 4 April 1956". Fold 3 web site. Available WWW: <http://www.fold3.com/image/6785497/>
5. ibid.
6. National Climatic Data Center. Radiosonde Data of North America 4-disk CD-ROM.
7. Belmont, A. D. The stratospheric Monsoon Part 1: An atlas of Prevailing Monthly Zonal Winds in the Stratosphere over the Northern Hemisphere. General Mills Electronic Group. GMI Report No. 2316 Minneapolis, Minnesota. August 3, 1962.
8. "Stratospheric balloons launched worldwide in 1956". Stratocat database. Available WWW: <http://stratocat.com.ar/globos/1956e.htm>
9. Froehlich, Harold E, Kizzek Roger A, Melton Donald F, Schwoebel Richard L. Air sampling means. Patent number US3077779 A February 19, 1963. Available WWW: <http://www.google.com/patents/US3077779>
10. Davenport, Joe. "Saucer Report deflated". Denton Record-Chronicle. Denton, Texas. April 5, 1956. Page 1.
11. Glines, Lt. Col. Carroll V. "Going up up...up in the sky". Air Force Magazine. January 1961. Page 126. Available WWW: <http://www.airforcemag.com/MagazineArchive/Pages/1961/January%201961/0161balloon.aspx>
12. "Huge Balloon causes power interruption." The Daily News. Huntingdon and Mount Union, Pa. April 7, 1956. Pages 1-2.
13. National Climatic Data Center. Radiosonde Data of North America 4-disk CD-ROM.
14. "Seen a flying saucer lately?" The Cedar Rapids Gazette. July 31, 1955. Page 17
15. "AEC balloon 'lights' on Dublin farm" The Baytown Sun. Baytown, Texas. January 17, 1955. Page 3.
16. "Navy sends up plastic balloons". The Abilene Reporter-News. Abilene, Texas. January 26, 1956. Page 11A
17. "Project Grab bag". Wikipedia. Available WWW: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Project_Grab_Bag
18. Peebles, Curtis. The Moby Dick Project: Reconnaissance balloons over Russia. Smithsonian Institute Press. Washington and London. 1991. P. 197
19. "Stratospheric balloons launched worldwide in 1957". Stratocat database. Available WWW: <http://stratocat.com.ar/globos/1957e.htm>
20. "Wayward balloon not sighted today". The Abilene Reporter-News. Abilene, Texas. February 12, 1957. Page 1
21. Gildenberg, Bernard D. "The Cold War's Classified Skyhook Program: A Participant's Revelations". Skeptical Inquirer. June 2004. Available WWW: http://www.csicop.org/si/show/cold_warsquos_classified_skyhook_program
22. "Big weather balloon observed in area". Brownwood Bulletin. Brownwood, Texas. April 23, 1956. Page 5
23. Gildenberg, Bernard D. "The Cold War's Classified Skyhook Program: A Participant's Revelations". Skeptical Inquirer. June 2004. Available WWW: http://www.csicop.org/si/show/cold_warsquos_classified_skyhook_program
24. Peebles, Curtis. The Moby Dick Project: Reconnaissance balloons over Russia. Smithsonian Institute Press. Washington and London. 1991. P. 105

Buy it, Borrow it, or Bin it

UFO Investigations Manual - Nigel Watson

Reviewing this book is something of a conflict of interest for me. Nigel had contacted me for IFO photographs some time ago to use in this book and, as a result, I am biased. Despite this reservation, I still felt readers of SUNlite should know more.

Nigel begins his book by recapping UFO history for three chapters. This is probably because the book is considered a "primer" for those wanting to learn about the subject. This section is well written and provides the necessary background to proceed to the subsequent chapters.

It isn't until the fourth chapter that we get to UFO investigations. I found the "Official UFO" magazine azimuth and elevation form a reasonable attempt at obtaining meaningful data. For some reason MUFON and NUFORC continue to list only verbal reports on their web sites. This continues to be a serious problem with UFO research. They just don't obtain the necessary information to properly analyze these reports.

The section on IFOs was adequate but I would think that some better case examples could have been used. Being able to understand how IFOs generate reports is a key to investigating all UFO reports.

The search for evidence and the different descriptions of aliens is explored in the next sections of the book. This included crash retrieval stories. I found the listing of retrieval motifs by John Harney very appropriate.

The Contactees and alien abduction sections were basically a historical accounting of such events. While some find these cases fascinating, I would not encourage amateurs to investigate such cases. A psychologist is probably more qualified.

In the final section, Mr. Watson discusses many theories and explanations concerning the UFO phenomena. This is followed by an appendix, where Nigel describes how to conduct an investigation. I found his idea of conducting a skywatch interesting but I think that it also may serve a dual purpose of educating the investigator about IFOs.

Allan Hendry set the standard for UFO investigation books and it is tough to match his work. Nigel's work is a good effort to meet that standard. It should be found in all UFO libraries and is definitely a buy it book.